



Senate Bill 303

Higher Education – Community College Tuition and Residency Waivers – Funding

MACo Position: **SUPPORT**

To: Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs
and Budget & Taxation Committees

Date: February 7, 2018

From: Kevin Kinnally

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **SUPPORTS** SB 303. This bill would increase state funding for community colleges beginning in 2020.

This legislation requires the State to fund mandatory tuition and residency waivers for Maryland's community colleges. Current state laws require community colleges to grant tuition and residency waivers for certain students. Without State support, such waivers place a heavy financial burden on community colleges, in the amount of approximately \$10 million per year.

When state funding for community colleges lags, additional pressure builds on county budgets and on student tuition. When county budgets face distress from the economic climate or state actions, the local contributions cannot reliably offset these unfunded mandates. For the past several years, this combined dynamic has led to increased tuition costs for Maryland community college students, at a time when the training and education opportunities are most needed.

SB 303 would help to offset unfunded state mandates for tuition and residency waivers, signaling a new commitment to community colleges on behalf of the State. This legislation would support policy changes that will allow community colleges to extend affordable education and career training access to more Marylanders.

For these reasons, MACo requests a **FAVORABLE** report on SB 303.