



Senate Bill 595

Community Colleges - Facilities Renewal Grant Program - Established

MACo Position: **SUPPORT**

Date: February 28, 2018

To: Budget & Taxation Committee

From: Robin Eilenberg

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **SUPPORTS** SB 595. The bill establishes a new program to provide grants for improvements, repairs, and deferred maintenance projects at community colleges, including Baltimore City Community College.

Maryland counties share in the funding responsibility for community college facilities by matching state expenditures for capital projects at community colleges according to a state-local cost share formula.

The grant program envisioned in this legislation will provide helpful assistance in tackling maintenance projects that will improve the learning environments of community college students and may extend the life of community college facilities, a joint investment of counties and the State of Maryland.

The facility renewal program will fund for small renovations those projects with total estimated costs of less than \$1 million. Under this legislation, each year beginning in fiscal 2019, the Governor must appropriate 5% of the annual appropriation for the Community College Construction Grant Program to the new facility renewal program.

The fiscal note estimates the new facility renewal appropriation to be \$3 million through 2020 and \$4 million annually through 2023. This relatively small expenditure on maintenance may provide a strong return on investment through savings in long-term facility replacement costs.

The funds would be distributed evenly to community college applicants, with no college generally receiving more than \$500,000 grant funding in one fiscal year, and with community colleges alternating years in which they receive grants. In this way, the program assures that all community colleges statewide are provided with some assistance for needed renovations and improvements.

For these reasons, MACo urges the Committee to give SB 595 a **FAVORABLE** report.