



Senate Bill 596

Higher Education - Community Colleges - Funding

MACo Position: **SUPPORT**

To: Budget & Taxation Committee

Date: February 28, 2018

From: Kevin Kinnally

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **SUPPORTS** SB 596. The bill would increase state funding for community colleges beginning in 2020.

This legislation requires the State to increase its contribution to Maryland's community colleges. Under this bill, by 2022, state aid for county community college would reach 29% of the per-pupil general fund appropriation to students at 4-year public institutions of higher education in the state.

Maryland counties have supported full funding of the State's Cade formula to fund community colleges. This formula represents the appropriate state share of the three-part state-county-student partnership to support community college offerings.

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 cutbacks. 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 arguably most needed.

SB 596 would increase the Cade formula, signaling a new commitment to community colleges on behalf of the State. This legislation would support policy changes that could allow community colleges to extend free and low-cost community college education and career training access to more Marylanders.

For these reasons, MACo requests a **FAVORABLE** report on SB 596.