Senate Bill 652

Education - Community Colleges - Collective Bargaining

MACo Position: **OPPOSE**

To: Finance Committee

Date: March 9, 2017

From: Kevin Kinnally and Natasha Mehu

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **OPPOSES** SB 652. This bill would establish a uniform statewide collective bargaining process for community college employees.

Counties oppose the one-size-fits-all approach of SB 652, which limits local decision-making. The move to collective bargaining outlined in this bill could create potentially unsustainable costs for counties, who provide substantial funding for community colleges throughout Maryland – especially since the legislation does not envision any added State support.

In addition, despite counties' role in supporting community colleges, this legislation would not provide any opportunity for county governments to participate in collective bargaining negotiations. The combination of these effects – State-imposed system and costs, no county participation in bargaining, and no additional State funding – is simply not affordable as a statewide county mandate and could present substantial budget difficulties.

Current state laws include distinct collective bargaining processes for community colleges in several jurisdictions. Several colleges already have some locally-authorized collective bargaining. This bill allows for collective bargaining contracts at those colleges to continue only until they expire. After that point, the existing systems must be repealed and substituted for the far more detailed and restrictive collective bargaining process required by SB 652.

As partners in the network of community colleges serving the states' residents, county governments reserve the ability to have input into potentially costly shifts in community college administration. Because this legislation would not provide local flexibility in the decision to allow collective bargaining at county community colleges, MACo **OPPOSES** SB 652 and recommends the Committee issue an **UNFAVORABLE** report.