



HOWARD COUNTY OFFICE OF COUNTY EXECUTIVE

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Senator Paul Pinsky, Chair
Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee
Miller Senate Office Building, 2 West
Annapolis, MD 21401

Re: Testimony **IN SUPPORT** of SB 540: Higher Education – Transfer Platform – Established
(Transfer With Success Act 2.0)

Dear Chair Pinsky, Vice Chair Kagan and Members of the Committee,

Often in times of economic uncertainty, our community colleges become a refuge for students and parents seeking more affordable options for higher education. Supporting more than 115,000 students across our state, community colleges are hubs for upward mobility, allowing students to gain the knowledge and skills they need to thrive in a competitive workforce, keeping Maryland open for business. Senate Bill 540 will address a pressing equity issue that many students face when transferring credits from a two-year institution to a four-year institution.

I commend Senator Elfreth for sponsoring Senate Bill 540 which would make it easier for community college student to transfer credits to four-year universities.

As County Executive and a former educator, I understand the power of education provides critical pathways to advancement. I am proud of the work that Howard Community College- one of the best colleges in the nation- has been able to achieve to create a highly skilled workforce. In 2019, Howard Community College received the prestigious *Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award*, which measures organizational success and performance excellence. This presidential-level honor highlights the critical services our college provides our community. Increased graduation rates, expanded opportunities for economic mobility, and empowering learners of all ages and background creates a significant return on investment for our county and therefore, the state.

Maryland's 16 community colleges will be better positioned to help students continue their academic pursuits at four-year institutions in Maryland. Together with the faculty and staff, students at our community colleges should be able to plan for their future and feel confident in their educational choices. I welcome your support and urge a favorable report on SB 540.

All the Best,

Calvin Ball
Howard County Executive