



Senate Bill 799 -- *Community Colleges Tuition and Residency Waiver*
Senate Budget and Taxation Committee
March 10, 2022
Support

The Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce (MCCC), the voice of business in Metro Maryland, supports Senate Bill 799 -- *Community College Tuition and Residency Waivers - Funding*. Senate Bill 799 requires \$10 million of annual funding, starting in Fiscal Year 2024, for the Maryland Higher Education Commission to fund State-mandated tuition and residency waivers for community colleges.

Community colleges play an integral role in Maryland's economy. These institutions address workforce and labor market issues through training, skills development, and providing a gateway to four-year colleges and universities. MCCC members have identified the attraction and retention of quality employees as their number one issue. Community colleges are a key to unlock a well-prepared and high-quality workforce that meets the needs of employers.

MCCC does not oppose current tuition waivers for community colleges. It is vital that community colleges are accessible to every Marylander. What is at issue are the unintended consequences of tuition waivers, which have expanded in recent years and created financial challenges for community colleges. When community colleges forgo tuition for students with waivers the costs are borne by the community college itself.

Senate Bill 799 provides funding for community colleges to replace forgone tuition while continuing to provide waivers that improve access for all students. The bill's funding will allow community colleges to remain affordable and enhance its programming to better meet the needs of Maryland's workforce.

For these reasons, the Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce supports Senate Bill 799 and respectfully requests a favorable report.

The Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce, on behalf of our nearly 500 members, advocates for growth in business opportunities, strategic investment in infrastructure, and balanced tax reform to advance Metro Maryland as a regional, national, and global location for business success. Established in 1959, MCCC is an independent non-profit membership organization and a proud Montgomery County Green Certified Business.

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