



**Senate Bill 864 -- *Universities at Shady Grove Regional Higher Education Center -  
Designation as Community of Innovation***  
**Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee**  
**February 14, 2024**  
**Support**

The Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce (MCCC), the voice of business in Metro Maryland, supports Senate Bill 864 -- *Universities at Shady Grove Regional Higher Education Center - Designation as Community of Innovation*.

Senate Bill 864 designates the Universities at Shady Grove (USG) as the State's Regional Higher Education Community of Innovation. The bill also alters the purposes of USG to include serving a diverse citizenry in an innovative manner to meet the educational needs of the region and fostering individual academic success leading to career success which positively impacts the entire economy of the region.

Proudly located in Montgomery County, USG offers undergraduate and graduate degree programs as part of the University System of Maryland. For the business and economic development community, USG provides pathways to meet workforce and career readiness needs. This vital role makes USG a pivotal part of our regional and State economy by training and preparing talent for a wide variety of industries.

By affirming USG's status as a community of innovation, the entire State of Maryland will enhance the ability to create academic pathways and employment opportunities while providing equitable and affordable educational opportunities vital to moving our economy forward. By recognizing USG with this designation, it grows the institution's ability to be innovative in its workforce and education objectives that are certain to benefit the economy and continue to address Maryland's most pressing labor market challenges.

**For these reasons, the Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce supports Senate Bill 864 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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