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Written Testimony Submitted for the Record to the
Maryland House of Delegates
Ways and Means Committee
For the Hearing on
Community Colleges – Maryland Community College Promise Scholarships
(HB 16)
January 25, 2018

SUPPORT

Maryland PTA represents thousands of volunteer members and families in 900 public schools. For nearly 103 years, our mission has been to make every child's potential a reality by engaging and empowering families and communities to advocate for all children. Maryland PTA is comprised of families, students, teachers, administrators, and business as well as community leaders devoted to the educational success of children and family engagement in Maryland. As the state's oldest and largest child advocacy organization, Maryland PTA is a powerful voice for all children, a relevant resource for families, schools and communities and a strong advocate for public education.

Maryland PTA submits this testimony in support of House Bill 16, Community Colleges – Maryland Community College Promise Scholarships. This bill authorizes the Governor to appropriate \$10,000,000 for the establishment of a Maryland Community College Promise Scholarships Program. Beginning in the 2019-2020 academic year, the annual scholarship will be capped at \$5,000 for eligible applicants to use for tuition at a community college of his or her choice.

Maryland PTA acknowledges that being career and college ready considers the level of achievement a student needs to be ready to enroll and succeed—without remediation—in credit-bearing first year postsecondary courses. However, Maryland PTA values preparedness as much as affordability and the economic component of being able to access a postsecondary education is equally important. And by postsecondary we mean primarily two-year or four-year institutions, trade schools, and technical schools. Knowing that high school students have viable options to pursue trades or specialized vocations upon graduation, this bill makes it easier to obtain a vocational or associates degree. This is particularly important for our high school students that are interested in a career and technology education.

Additionally, Maryland PTA understands that oftentimes living expenses such as rent, food, and transportation can be more than tuition. Being able to afford an education requires a comprehensive approach and this bill will makes it more palatable for our high school students to transition to a post-secondary institution that provides occupationally relevant or career-related curriculum. While knowing that there are always barriers to overcome when obtaining an education, the establishment of the Maryland Community College Promise Scholarships is a step in the right direction toward helping students prepare for a career for which they will be ready. Thus, producing a strong workforce to which Maryland Public Schools contribute.

For the reasons stated above, Maryland PTA encourages your vote to SUPPORT House Bill 16.

Testimony is presented on the behalf of

Latisha Corey

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