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### **Governor Larry Hogan signs landmark community college promise scholarship legislation**

Program earmarks \$15 million in need-based tuition aid, more than doubles current funding levels

Annapolis, MD - With a flourish of his pen, Governor Larry Hogan today signed the milestone Near Completers and Maryland Community College Promise Scholarships bill ([HB 16](#)), which allocates \$15 million per year in need-based tuition aid for eligible community college students. Senate President Thomas V. "Mike" Miller and Speaker of the House Michael Busch joined Governor Hogan to sign the legislation that passed during the final ten minutes of the 2018 Maryland General Assembly session. The governor and presiding officers were joined by the bill's lead sponsor, Delegate Frank S. Turner of Howard County, numerous other elected officials, presidents of several Maryland community colleges, and staff from the Maryland Association of Community Colleges (MACC).

"This is a win – win for our students and our state," said Dr. Bernie Sadusky, MACC executive director. "It's a win for our students, most of whom are low-income, work, and have family responsibilities. And it's a win for Maryland because a more educated workforce is the engine of economic growth."<sup>i</sup>

By 2020, 69% of Maryland jobs will require a postsecondary education according to the Georgetown Center on Education and the Workforce,<sup>ii</sup> while about 40% of Maryland's high school graduates don't enroll in any postsecondary education within one year of graduation.<sup>iii</sup> Meanwhile, Maryland employers in high-demand fields contend with unfilled positions and insufficiently skilled applicants.

The program, which begins academic year 2019 - 2020, requires students access all other eligible financial aid before Maryland's College Promise scholarship funds, up to \$5,000 per year, are awarded. Recipients must work in Maryland one year for each year of scholarship awarded, or the scholarships convert to loans and must be repaid.

Other requirements include full-time enrollment in a community college for a vocational certificate, a credit certificate, or an associate degree, within two years of graduating high school or completing a GED; high school GPA of 2.3 or higher; and an annual adjusted gross income of not more than \$100,000 if the applicant is single or resides in a single-parent household, or \$150,000 if applicant is married or resides in a two-parent household.

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“Tuition costs shouldn’t make students choose between food and other basic necessities,” said Richard D. Norling, President of MACC, and Chair of the Board of Trustees at Harford Community College. “It’s gratifying to see this legislation pass; MACC has worked for this for years.”

Delegate Turner has stated that he considers this bill the second-most important of his 24-year tenure in the House of Delegates because it can reduce college loan debt and help more Marylanders participate in the American dream, according to [The Baltimore Sun](#).

Maryland joins several states with statewide College Promise programs, and over 200 local programs.

The legislation also provides \$2 million over five years to students who are close to finishing degrees at community colleges and four-year institutions. These near-completer students can receive up to one-third of tuition due.

### **About Maryland Association of Community Colleges (MACC)**

The [Maryland Association of Community Colleges \(MACC\)](#) is an advocate for the state’s 16 community colleges and the educational needs of the almost half million students they serve. The colleges offer online learning, 23 campuses, and over 1000 learning sites where students pursue a wide variety of associate degrees, over 150 career credentials, and life enrichment curriculums. Our [WorkSmart](#) initiative offers customized workforce training to employers. (410) 974-8117; [www.mdacc.org](http://www.mdacc.org)

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<sup>i</sup> [America Works: Education and Training for Tomorrow’s Jobs: The Benefit of a More Educated Workforce to Individuals and the Economy](#), National Governors Association Chair’s Initiative 2013-2014.

<sup>ii</sup> [Recovery: Job Growth and Educational Requirements through 2020, state report](#). Georgetown Center on Education and the Workforce, 6/2013.

<sup>iii</sup> [2017 Annual Report on the Maryland Longitudinal Data System and Center](#), MLDS, 12/2017.