



June 30, 2020

Maryland Independent College and University Association

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Capitol Technology University

Goucher College

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Ner Israel Rabbinical College

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The Honorable Lawrence J. Hogan, Jr.
Governor
100 State Circle
Annapolis, MD 21401

The Honorable Peter Franchot
Comptroller
Louis L. Goldstein Treasury Building
80 Calvert St.
Annapolis, MD 21401

The Honorable Nancy K. Kopp
Treasurer
Louis L. Goldstein Treasury Building
80 Calvert St
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Governor Hogan, Comptroller Franchot, and Treasurer Kopp:

On behalf of the more than 65,600 students served by the private nonprofit member institutions of the Maryland Independent College and University Association (MICUA), we write to express appreciation for the leadership that you have demonstrated during this unprecedented, uncertain, and unnerving time of public health crisis and social unrest. We recognize that you have extremely difficult decisions to make in your role as members of the Board of Public Works. However, **we urge you to reject the \$10.6 million reduction to the Joseph A. Sellinger program** that has been proposed by the Department of Budget and Management. Coupled with COVID-related expenses, this reduction may prove devastating to some of our institutions; but more importantly, **this reduction will deprive many low-income Maryland students of financial aid** that makes it possible for them to access and afford the higher education institution of their choice.

MICUA Demographics

The MICUA institutions offer more than 1,600 approved academic programs, including more than 900 post-baccalaureate and graduate programs, in 180 geographic locations throughout the State. Last year, our institutions awarded more than 15,200 degrees and achieved remarkable outcomes as measured by high retention and graduation rates, shorter time-to-degree, low student loan default rates, and top-ranked mid-career salary earnings.

We are actively engaged in conversations regarding diversity and inclusion on our campuses. Between 2008 and 2018, undergraduate enrollment of underrepresented minority (African American, Hispanic, or Native American) students grew at our institutions by 77%. During this same time period,

enrollment of Pell recipients grew by 103%. Enrollment data from fall of 2018 is as follows:

- 38% of our undergraduate students were underrepresented minority students;
- 23% of our undergraduate students were Pell recipients;
- 79% of our undergraduate students received some form of financial aid; and
- 90% of our incoming first-time/full-time freshmen received some form of financial aid.

Further, 26% of full-time faculty at MICUA institutions are minorities and three of our institutions are majority-minority institutions.

The Sellinger Program

In fiscal 2019, of the funds received through the Sellinger Program:

- \$50 million (89%) was awarded as financial aid to increase access to quality higher education for Maryland residents;
- \$3.4 million (6%) was used to foster student success through programs to enhance teaching effectiveness, improve learning environments, and increase campus diversity; and
- \$2.6 million (5%) was used to spur and nurture innovative strategies in academic research and pedagogy.

Sellinger Financial Aid and Outreach to Low-Income Students

Mirroring our passion and commitment to ensure that all students have access to, and choice of, the institution of higher education that best fits their needs, the vast majority of Sellinger funds are used for financial aid for Maryland students. In fiscal 2019, we offered over \$700 million in institutional-based financial aid. For the State's lowest-income high-achieving students, we are proud to have launched the Guaranteed Access Partnership Program (GAPP), which matches 100% of the State-awarded Guaranteed Access Grants. For the 2020-2021 academic year, these students will receive up to \$38,800 per year towards their pursuit of higher education at our institutions.

The reduction in the Sellinger Program funding proposed by DBM will be realized as a reduction of financial aid that is available for low-income Maryland students.

Outreach and supports that we provide to low-income students include both on and off-campus programming such as: connecting with local high schools; partnering with community-based organizations; hosting fully-funded summer programs that provide leadership and critical thinking skills and fight against summer melt; assigning peer mentors; training student leaders, faculty, and staff in the unique needs of diverse populations; assigning a contact person to all students who are identified as "at-risk"; and providing personalized meetings, workshops, collaborations with other on-campus services and departments, and guest speakers.

Sellinger Programmatic Supports

The funds that we use for purposes other than financial aid are the true beauty of the Sellinger Program. It is not enough to get a student through the front door of the institution in order to succeed. Students also need, and our favorable retention and graduation rates support, programs and services *throughout* their academic career. Some of the programs and services that have been made possible through the

use of Sellinger funds include: career preparation and advising; social justice advocacy opportunities; health counseling services; expanded STEM, teaching, nursing, and public safety leadership initiatives; exposure to community-based redevelopment; and multicultural and diversity training.

COVID-related Impacts

While we are grateful for the funds that our institutions and our students have received under the federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act, these funds covered less than 12% of our financial need, which we determined to be over \$200 million in lost revenue and over \$7.4 million in COVID-related expenses – *for the spring semester alone*. Throughout the summer and into the fall, we will continue to experience COVID-related losses that include: the cancelation of campus events such as summer camps and other sporting, recreational, and social gatherings; declined auxiliary service (dining, parking) revenues; declined charitable giving; and unrealized tuition revenue. COVID-related expenses that will be necessary for us to reopen safely in the fall include, but are not limited to: personal protective equipment for students, faculty, and staff; deep cleaning and sanitation supplies and contracts; testing-related costs; medical supplies and equipment for treating students who become ill and quarantine on campus; alterations of dining services contracts; COVID safety training for faculty, staff, and students; informational or promotional materials reminding students to wash hands, wear masks, and remain socially distant; legal fees relating to compliance; rental/leasing of additional facility space for residential, classroom, dining, and quarantine type purposes; technology hardware and WiFi hotspots to effectuate remote instruction; and unrecoverable sponsored programming fees.

We are not only academic centers of excellence, but also major employers in our regions. We employ over 33,000 people throughout the State and paid over \$4.1 billion in wages in fiscal 2018. In six Maryland counties, a MICUA institution is the only four-year institution of higher education in that county. We want to be part of the road to social and economic recovery, as historically this has been the role of higher education. However, to do this we will need the same support that is being provided to other institutions and employers.

We committed to avoiding layoffs for as long as we could, instead implementing salary reductions or furlough strategies in an effort to keep people employed. However, the majority of our institutions are ineligible for any financial relief offered at the federal level by the Small Business Administration. Therefore, at some point, many of us may have no other choice but to implement workforce reductions.

Conclusion

We celebrate our longstanding partnership with both the State of Maryland and the other segments of higher education through the formula funding of the Sellinger Program, and our participation and contributions to shaping financial aid and higher education policy in the State. We have never taken this funding for granted. We vow to continue to put all of our efforts toward perpetuating the stellar return on investment that these tax dollars have produced.

We appreciate your kind consideration of this request to **reject the proposed reduction to the Sellinger Program**. Coupled with the expenses and losses of COVID, as described above, this reduction will not only harm our institutions, it will harm Maryland students.

We are available to discuss any of the information in this letter in more detail at your convenience. Please contact Sara Fidler via email at sfidler@micua.org or via telephone at 410-269-0306 and she will connect you with any of us or answer your questions directly.

Many thanks,



Ms. Sara Fidler, President
MARYLAND INDEPENDENT COLLEGE AND
UNIVERSITY ASSOCIATION



Dr. Roger N. Casey, President
McDANIEL COLLEGE



Dr. Andrea E. Chapdelaine, MICUA Chair and
President
HOOD COLLEGE



Dr. Timothy E. Trainor, President
MOUNT ST. MARY'S UNIVERSITY



Dr. Bradford L. Sims, President
CAPITOL TECHNOLOGY UNIVERSITY



Dr. Marylou Yam, President
NOTRE DAME OF MARYLAND UNIVERSITY



Mr. Kent Devereaux, President
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Dr. Sunil Kumar, Provost
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Mr. Kurt M. Landgraf, President
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