

Maryland Independent College
and University Association

140 SOUTH STREET
ANNAPOLIS, MD 21401

PHONE: 410-269-0306
FAX: 410-269-5905
www.micua.org

TESTIMONY

House Appropriations Committee

HB 916 – Maryland National Guard – Tuition Assistance Program - Modifications

Tina Bjarekull, President

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February 21, 2019

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Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony supporting *HB 916 – Maryland National Guard – Tuition Assistance Program – Modifications*. This bill mandates the Maryland National Guard to pay 100% of the remaining cost of in-State tuition, after any institutional waiver, for any active National Guard member enrolled in undergraduate, graduate, professional, vocational-technical, or trade course at an institution certified as eligible by the Adjutant General. The National Guard member can utilize the financial assistance at any private institution of higher education that grants a National Guard member a tuition waiver of at least 50%. MICUA members are interested in participating in this program to help support Maryland National Guard members.

MICUA members have always been dedicated to helping members of the armed services. Every MICUA member institution actively participates in the federal Yellow Ribbon Program and matches the Yellow Ribbon grants to pay for college costs, including tuition, fees, books, room, and board. In addition to the Yellow Ribbon Program, several MICUA institutions offer targeted financial assistance to veterans, military members, and their families, including reduced tuition, scholarships, and other tuition assistance benefits. One MICUA institution provides a \$25,000 annual scholarship, the Military Legacy Scholarship, for veterans, active duty military personnel, and their children. MICUA and its member institutions also participate in the Maryland College Collaboration for Veterans in order to better serve and recruit veterans to MICUA campuses.

MICUA institutions are dedicated to serving Maryland's National Guard members. House Bill 916 builds on the foundation and existing relationships established by the Yellow Ribbon Program and will greatly enhance the ability of Maryland National Guard members to access higher education.

MICUA respectfully requests a favorable report for HB 916.