

TESTIMONY

Senate Finance Committee

SB 472 – Labor and Employment – Maryland Working Families Act

Tina Bjarekull, President

March 3, 2016

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On behalf of Maryland’s independent colleges and universities and the 63,000 students they serve, thank you for the opportunity to submit this written testimony in opposition to *Senate Bill 472 -Labor and Employment – Maryland Working Families Act*.

SB 472 provides for one hour of paid leave for every 8 hours per week worked. This would negatively impact the way that colleges and universities compensate faculty. Currently, adjunct faculty are paid a per-semester stipend for teaching a course. This arrangement allows institutions to offer diverse courses for students. Adjunct faculty members have tremendous flexibility in fulfilling the terms of their contracts. The administrative burden to track every hour worked per week would be onerous to the faculty and extremely expensive for institutions to implement. Further, many adjunct faculty members work in full-time positions at other institutions or industries, which provide paid leave benefits.

As currently proposed, SB 472 would provide sick leave benefits to interns and student workers. This would dramatically increase the costs for colleges and universities and create numerous complications for tracking work/study programs. On-campus jobs, internships, and work/study arrangements provide college students with latitude and flexibility to accomplish the responsibilities of their positions. Students receive stipends or discounted tuition on a per-semester basis. SB 472 would create huge administrative burdens for little to no gain, because interns and work study students seldom lose funding for taking a sick day.

If the General Assembly passes SB 472, MICUA strongly urges the body to follow the example of the City of Philadelphia and specifically exempt adjunct professors, interns, and work/study students. Philadelphia lawmakers recognized that imposing these conditions on college campuses would have a deleterious impact. Students will be forced to pay more for their college education, and educators will have less opportunity and

flexibility to earn additional income as adjunct faculty.

In short, SB 472 will negatively impact college affordability and decrease the number and variety of programs offered by Maryland's higher education institutions. Staff costs will increase dramatically, and many educators who currently find additional work as adjunct faculty will see those opportunities disappear. The bill will result in less adjunct faculty on campus, less diverse programming, and greater costs.

For these reasons, MICUA requests an unfavorable report of SB 472.