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## TESTIMONY

### Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee

#### *SB 493– Teacher Induction, Retention, and Advancement Act of 2016*

**Tina Bjarekull, President**

**February 24, 2016**

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Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony in support of SB 493: Teacher Induction, Retention, and Advancement Act of 2016. This bill favorably acknowledges the intense demands placed on new teachers by offering critical supports for first-year teachers in Maryland public schools. It also incentivizes teachers to seek certification through the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards and positions National Board Certified teachers to assume greater leadership roles within Maryland schools.

Eleven of MICUA's 13 member institutions prepare highly-qualified teachers for Maryland classrooms through State-approved teacher preparation programs. These colleges and universities collectively produce one third of Maryland's new teacher candidates each year. Notre Dame of Maryland University is the second largest producer of teacher candidates in Maryland, behind Towson University; McDaniel College offers an award-winning program to prepare teachers for the deaf and hearing impaired; Stevenson University was the first institution in Maryland to offer a middle school certification program; and several MICUA institutions offer unique programs for students with special needs.

Preparing teachers to be successful in the classroom does not end when a student earns a teaching degree. MICUA recognizes the need for strong induction programs that successfully support teachers as they navigate the critical first few years of their teaching careers. As is true for all professionals, teachers need opportunities for continued learning and professional development both as they enter and advance in their careers.

For many years, MICUA has co-sponsored the Teachers of Promise Institute, which is convened by the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) annually. This year's event will be held on April 15. The program identifies the best and the brightest teacher candidates who are enrolled at Maryland's public universities and independent institutions

and matches these students with award-winning educators. Successful veteran teachers serve as mentors to the students and assist these future educators in the transition from college students to first-year teachers. This is only one example of many MICUA member programs that support new teachers in Maryland.

SB 493 delineates several activities proven to influence the retention of new teachers—including mentoring, peer observation, and assistance with planning—and designates 20% more time in the school day for such activities. Additionally, it protects first-year teachers from the outside demands of additional student supervision or administrative responsibilities during their first year of teaching. SB 493 also incentivizes teachers to seek certification through the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, which is the most respected professional certification available for K-12 educators and signifies that they have met the highest national standards for teaching practice. To date, 2,785 Maryland teachers have become National Board Certified.

For these reasons, MICUA urges a favorable report for SB 493.