



SENATE BUDGET & TAXATION COMMITTEE  
FRIDAY, MARCH 6, 2009

**Support SB 728**

**Higher Education – System and Funding**

Chairman Currie, Vice Chairman Kasemeyer, and Committee members, thank you for the opportunity to provide my comments on SB 728. The University System of Maryland (USM) supports SB 728.

I am very proud to be in Maryland and feel that our state has demonstrated an tremendous commitment to education at all levels. I am also proud because I do believe that this commitment is reaping benefits and is seen in the myriad of national educational rankings.

When the citizens of Maryland chose to include language in our Constitution referencing the importance of education our world was a very different place. It was a time when a primary or at the most a secondary education was the requirement for a educated, vibrant and healthy society. We are all aware of the technological challenges and global competition we face today.

SB 728 takes us to the next step of having the Maryland Constitution recognize the importance of higher education in today's society. The goals of this amendment are in complete alignment with the goals of the University System of Maryland :"**THE SYSTEM OF HIGHER EDUCATION SHALL BE BROADLY ACCESSIBLE TO THE PEOPLE AND SHALL BE DEDICATED TO EXCELLENCE IN HIGHER EDUCATION**"

Thank you for allowing the University System of Maryland to share these thoughts about SB 728 and I urge your favorable consideration.