

2026 LEGISLATIVE SESSION REPORT

A REPORT FROM THE OFFICE OF GOVERNMENT RELATIONS
AND THE STATE RELATIONS COUNCIL



UNIVERSITY SYSTEM
of MARYLAND

Bowie State University

Coppin State University

Frostburg State University

Salisbury University

Towson University

University of Baltimore

University of Maryland, Baltimore

University of Maryland,
Baltimore County

University of Maryland
Center for Environmental Science

University of Maryland,
College Park

University of Maryland
Eastern Shore

University of Maryland
Global Campus

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A MESSAGE FROM CHANCELLOR JAY A. PERMAN

Dear Friends and Colleagues:

Maryland's 2026 legislative session has drawn to a close, and it was even more hectic than usual. (Anyone who's spent springtime in Annapolis knows that's a tough bar to clear.) Altogether, 2,700 bills were filed, with 300+ affecting our System, our people, and our work.

But it wasn't the size of this year's legislative agenda that made it an outlier; it was the *pace*. A huge number of bills passed out of their committees – and quickly – requiring an enormous amount of work in analysis and advocacy. Key pieces of legislation, including several affecting higher education, were still being debated in the session's final week, meaning we used every minute of those 90 days.

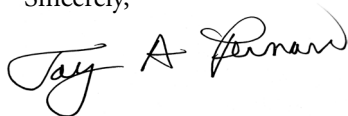
Some of the bills that passed will substantially affect our operations, employees, and students— notably, collective bargaining rights extended to non-tenure-track faculty and to certain graduate assistants. I was particularly pleased with the passage of two bills centering the System in strengthening Maryland: Championed by Sen. Kevin Harris and Del. Edith Patterson, SB529 sets the stage for an Early College teacher pathway program in Southern Maryland and, more broadly, for the expansion of Early College opportunities statewide. Meanwhile, Sen. Katie Fry Hester's SB597 establishes an AI Partnership at the System to guide and accelerate responsible AI use across state agencies and small businesses and grow Maryland's AI workforce.

Maryland entered the session with a \$1.5 billion shortfall. We ended it with a budget that closes that deficit and keeps the System's operating budget whole. And generous capital funding means we can continue creating campuses that nurture our work in education, discovery, and service. We're grateful that our leaders recognize the impact of the cuts we've suffered over the last two years and passed a budget that allows us to protect our priorities and our people.

We're grateful, too, for \$25 million allocated to USM research, as federal support for academic R&D shrinks. In the short term, the dollars allow us to safeguard research and research teams across the System, while we execute a long-term strategy to diversify our funding portfolio and strengthen the enterprise overall.

In times of challenge, I value the faith and goodwill of our leaders, who trust us to drive Maryland growth and prosperity. And I value every one of my colleagues who spent long days in Annapolis, especially our indefatigable government relations teams – led by Vice Chancellor Susan Lawrence – who worked for 90 days on little sleep and little free time to do anything but the hard and rewarding work of advancing the System, our mission, and our students.

Sincerely,



Jay A. Perman
Chancellor
University System of Maryland



FISCAL YEAR 2027 OPERATING BUDGET

As lawmakers convened the 2026 Legislative Session, the State continued to grapple with unprecedented cash and structural imbalances that had emerged in prior years and reshaped the budget landscape. The recent wave of federal employee layoffs hitting Maryland residents has forced state budget makers to confront weaker income-tax revenues and higher demand for state safety-net services at the same time they are trying to close structural budget gaps and maintain core investments.

Significant projected general fund cash and structural budget shortfalls led to a challenging fiscal outlook as the 2026 session began. In December 2025, projected cash shortfalls totaled \$1.56 billion for fiscal 2027. In January, the Department of Legislative Services (DLS) underscored the magnitude of the challenge ahead. Looking toward fiscal year 2027, DLS projected a renewed general fund shortfall absent further policy action, even after accounting for tax changes and budgetary adjustments adopted in FY 2026. More concerning, the structural imbalance – defined as ongoing expenditures exceeding ongoing revenues – was projected to persist and widen in subsequent years, with annual gaps again approaching \$3 billion by the end of the decade.

The FY 2026 budget carried forward significant prior-year deficiencies and obligations, limiting budgetary flexibility and constraining options as the state approached the FY 2027 cycle. Together, the Board of Revenue Estimates and DLS highlighted a sobering reality: Maryland has made meaningful progress stabilizing its near-term finances, but the underlying misalignment between revenues and spending remains the central fiscal challenge confronting policymakers in the years ahead.

The enacted FY 2027 budget projects a general fund balance of approximately \$250 million – providing a buffer that helps protect from midyear cuts or volatility. At the same time, the State preserved its Rainy Day Fund at 8 percent, meeting national best-practice benchmarks and reinforcing confidence in Maryland’s ability to sustain long-term investments in colleges, universities, and student financial aid.

USM OPERATING BUDGET

Together with the USM Presidents, one of the key responsibilities of the Office of the Chancellor is to prepare and advance the annual operating and capital budgets for our 12 distinguished institutions, and the three regional higher education centers that comprise the University System of Maryland.

The USM will receive \$2.3 billion in state support. Funding specifically for the USM **increases overall by \$7.1 million, or 0.3%**, compared to fiscal 2026. A proposed \$35.7 million goes toward a 1.5% COLA for USM state funded employees, effective July 1. This increase is critical as salaries struggle to keep pace with inflation, and it signals the governor’s abiding support for our people, who power our progress on every metric that matters. The System will have to absorb that pay raise for employees not covered by state funds. In FY27 alone, the cost would be at least \$25 million. Over the last five years, FY22 to FY26, the USM has covered unfunded salary increases totaling over 24%, at a cost exceeding \$362 million.

The governor’s budget proposal continues Maryland’s historic support for the System’s three HBCUs – \$32.5 million in new funding for Bowie State University, Coppin State University, and the University of Maryland Eastern Shore. It’s the fifth installment of the 10-year, \$577 million HBCU settlement approved in 2021. With this year’s installment, the three universities will have received a total of \$161 million in added funding.

The General Assembly also added funds for various important programs and initiatives at USM institutions, including:

- \$1,500,000 in general funds is added to the appropriation for the University of Baltimore for the Schaefer Center for Public Policy.

- \$150,000 in general funds is added to the appropriation for the University of Maryland, Baltimore for the Center for Infant and Child Loss at the University of Maryland School of Medicine.
- \$400,000 in general funds is added to the appropriation for the University of Maryland, Center for Environmental Science for Horn Point Lab.
- \$250,000 in general funds is added to the appropriation for Coppin State University for Campus Safety.
- \$250,000 in general funds is added to the appropriation for Towson University for the Maryland Center for Community Schools.
- \$300,000 in general funds is added to the appropriation for Towson University for the Grasmick Leadership Institute.
- \$200,000 in general funds to the University of Maryland, College Park, for TerpsExceed.
- \$250,000 in general funds to the University of Maryland, College Park, for providing a grant to The Judge Alexander Williams, Jr. Center for Education, Justice and Ethics.
- \$100,000 in general funds to the University of Maryland, College Park, for the Partnership for Action Learning in Sustainability that is administered by the National Center for Smart Growth.
- \$1 million to the University of Maryland, Global Campus for Maryland Completion Scholarships.
- \$500,000 in general funds to the University System of Maryland Office for the purpose of creating a statewide Artificial Intelligence partnership and Maryland Tech Extension Hubs.

State support for student financial aid increases by \$6.7 million, or 3.1%, to \$223.2 million in fiscal 2027. The largest need-based aid program, the Delegate Howard P. Rawlings Educational Excellence Awards Program, is level-funded at \$138.7 million in fiscal 2027.

As the federal government shrinks its investment in academic R&D and shifts its research priorities, we're particularly grateful for the governor's proposal to support university-based research centers across the System. The FY 2027 operating budget includes \$42 million in a Dedicated Purpose Account intended to help four-year institutions and research centers. **The funding is discretionary and will assist campuses pivot and bridge lost research dollars from the federal government. The USM will receive \$25 million of these funds.**

Another \$100,000 in the governor's budget goes to UMB's Center for Cyber, Health, and Hazard Strategies, now staffing the state's Workgroup on Artificial Intelligence Implementation, established last session to ensure the responsible integration of AI into state functions and to protect consumer rights and privacy.

A \$5,000,000 increase in general funds to the University of Maryland, College Park for Applied Research Laboratory for Intelligence and Security (ARLIS)— Administered in the Governor's Allowance

Also included in the governor's proposal is PAYGO funding for the renovation of Towson University's Smith Hall (\$14 million) and for UMB's new School of Social Work building (\$3 million). Another \$4.1 million goes to the operation of new campus facilities across the System, many of which support education and R&D in areas of urgent workforce need.

Other Key Targeted Budget Items:

1. \$1.5M increase in general funds to USM institutions for CH 181 of 2024- UMB School of Medicine and Mpowering – Administered on Target Memo
2. \$3.8M increase in general funds to USM institutions for CH 683 of 2021: Guideline Attainment – Administered on Target Memo
3. \$51.5M increase in general funds to USM institutions for across the board changes for statewide costs subobjects. (These have no net impact, as they are related to projected reduced expenditures at the institutions) – Combination of Target Memo and Governor’s Allowance
4. (\$29.5M) decrease to general funds to USM to adjust for turnover - Administered in the Governor’s Allowance
5. \$550,000 increase to special funds to University of Maryland, College Park for MFRI Information Technology Modernization – Administered in the Governor’s Allowance
6. (\$150,000) decrease to general funds to University of Maryland, College Park for Native Plant Reduction – Administered in the Governor’s Allowance
7. \$20,000,000 increase in general funds to the University of Maryland, College Park for Capital of Quantum Operations – Administered in the Governor’s Allowance
8. (\$350,000) reduction in general funds to the University of Maryland, College Park for HB1082 Consumer Health Information Hub – Administered in the budget bill
9. (\$5,000,000) reduction in funds to the University of Maryland, College Park for Climate Catalytic Capital Fund for MCEC – Administered in Supplemental #1 due to duplication in budget.
10. \$100,000 increase in general funds to the University System of Maryland Office for Study on Climate Change ([SB 739/HB 1219](#)) – Administered in Supplemental budget #2



FISCAL YEAR 2027 CAPITAL CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS

The University System of Maryland's Capital Planning Office, working in close partnership with the USM Office of the Comptroller, leads the development and execution of the annual capital budget, the five- and ten-year Capital Improvement Program (CIP), and Academic Revenue Bond activity. This work reflects a collaborative, deliberative process – bringing together institutional leadership, the Board of Regents, the Administration, and the budget committees of the General Assembly – to advance projects from concept through construction in a fiscally responsible and transparent manner.

At the USM access for all extends well beyond the point of enrollment. It means ensuring that every student has the facilities and infrastructure needed to thrive: classrooms designed for collaboration and discovery; laboratories that support world-class research; and shared spaces that foster connection, belonging, and the exchange of ideas. Strategic, sustained investment in campus environments is essential to student success – and legislative support for the USM capital program makes that investment possible.

These investments also advance Maryland's long-term economic priorities. The State's growth agenda is driven by industries that depend on the talent, research, and innovation produced by USM institutions – from information technology and life sciences to aerospace, defense, and advanced manufacturing. By modernizing and renewing academic facilities across the System, the Governor and General Assembly are helping ensure that the industries shaping the economy of tomorrow continue to grow and remain rooted in Maryland. USM's capital program provides the physical foundation for that vision – equipping institutions to foster innovation, prepare a highly skilled workforce, and strengthen the State's competitiveness for decades to come.

The FY 2027 Capital Budget process has been successful this year. All of the Governor's requests were approved as they appear in the Capital Improvement Program (CIP). With a commitment over \$231.2 million in FY 2027, the General Assembly approved several USM projects included in the Governor's Capital Budget making the final action a major win for the USM. This year's capital budget made critical additions to the CIP while accelerating several other projects. Actions taken by the General Assembly related to the Capital Budget under [Senate Bill 283](#) and [Senate Bill 769](#) (*Academic Facilities Bonding Authority*) were divided into three parts.

CAPITAL CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS – BY CAMPUS

UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND, BALTIMORE (UMB)

Central Electric Substation and Redundancy: \$715,000 for construction

PROJECT SUMMARY: This project is part of a multi-year effort to replace and modernize the electrical infrastructure serving the UMB campus. The work addresses critical reliability and redundancy deficiencies by advancing construction of new substations and upgraded distribution systems. The project mitigates risk associated with aging equipment, improves resiliency for academic, research, and clinical facilities, and ensures continuity of operations for Maryland's public academic health campus.

New School of Social Work Building: \$46.747 million for planning, construction, and equipment (including \$3.015 million in SEIF operating pay-as-you-go funds)

PROJECT SUMMARY: This project completes construction of a new, consolidated School of Social Work building, replacing functionally obsolete facilities. The new facility supports modern instruction, research, and community engagement while incorporating high-performance building systems and sustainability features consistent with USM and State energy goals.

School of Dentistry Ambulatory Surgery Center: \$862,000 for construction and equipment

PROJECT SUMMARY: This project supports completion of an ambulatory surgery center for the School of Dentistry, expanding clinical training capacity and modernizing outpatient oral health care facilities in support of dental education and patient services.

UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND, COLLEGE PARK (UMCP)

Interdisciplinary Engineering Building (Zupnik Hall): \$13.11 million for construction and equipment

PROJECT SUMMARY: This project advances construction of a new interdisciplinary engineering facility that supports instruction, research, and collaboration across multiple engineering disciplines. The building addresses chronic space constraints, supports industry partnerships, and aligns with UMCP's long-term research and innovation strategy.

Campuswide Building Systems and Infrastructure Improvements: \$12.5 million for construction

PROJECT SUMMARY: This stand-alone facilities renewal initiative addresses deferred maintenance and infrastructure deficiencies across campus, including building systems and underground utilities. The program reduces operational risk, protects prior State investment, and improves reliability for academic and research activities.

Health and Human Sciences Complex: \$44.315 million for construction (including \$15 million in Academic Revenue Bonds)

PROJECT SUMMARY: This project supports construction of a Health and Human Sciences Complex providing modern research, instructional, and clinical space for UMCP programs in public health, kinesiology, and related disciplines. The facility increases capacity for sponsored research and supports workforce development in health-related fields.

Graduate Student Housing Subsidy: \$5 million for acquisition, planning, construction, and equipment

PROJECT SUMMARY: This project supports site development and infrastructure improvements that make it feasible to deliver below-market graduate student housing. The work addresses affordability challenges and supports graduate student recruitment, retention, and success.

Xfinity Center Roof Repair: \$10 million for planning, construction, and equipment

PROJECT SUMMARY: This project addresses structural and weather-related deficiencies in the Xfinity Center roof, protecting the long-term use of a major campus and public-facing facility used for athletics, commencements, and large events.

BOWIE STATE UNIVERSITY (BSU)

Thurgood Marshall Library and Academic Commons: \$4.802 million for planning

PROJECT SUMMARY: This project advances planning for a new library and academic commons that will replace an outdated facility and provide flexible, technology-enabled space for learning, collaboration, and research.

Boiler and Chiller Upgrades: \$1 million for planning, construction, and equipment

PROJECT SUMMARY: This project replaces aging central plant equipment to improve reliability, energy efficiency, and campus resiliency.

Safety and Security Upgrades: \$500,000 for planning, construction, and equipment

PROJECT SUMMARY: Funding supports enhancements to campus safety and security infrastructure, including systems that improve protection for students, faculty, staff, and visitors.

MARC Station Redevelopment Infrastructure Improvements: \$2 million for planning, construction, and equipment

PROJECT SUMMARY: This project supports infrastructure improvements associated with long-term redevelopment near the Bowie State MARC station, enhancing campus accessibility and regional connectivity.

TOWSON UNIVERSITY (TU)

Smith Hall Renovation and Reconstruction: \$35.973 million for construction and equipment (including \$14 million in SEIF operating pay-as-you-go funds)

PROJECT SUMMARY: This project renovates and reconstructs Smith Hall to consolidate academic programs, modernize instructional and production spaces, replace obsolete building systems, and reduce deferred maintenance while advancing campus sustainability goals.

Electrical Sub-Station: \$12.82 million for planning (including \$10 million in Academic Revenue Bonds)

PROJECT SUMMARY: This project expands and upgrades campus electrical infrastructure to support growing academic and residential demand, improve reliability, and accommodate future development.

Central Plant Restoration: \$10.6 million for planning, construction, and equipment

PROJECT SUMMARY: This supplemental request restores and modernizes central utility plant components to ensure reliable delivery of chilled water, steam, and electrical support for campus facilities.

UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND EASTERN SHORE (UMES)

New School of Veterinary Medicine: \$1 million for planning, construction, and equipment

PROJECT SUMMARY: This project supports early development and implementation of the University of Maryland Eastern Shore's proposed School of Veterinary Medicine, which will establish the first Doctor of Veterinary Medicine (DVM) program in Maryland and one of only two veterinary programs nationally at a Historically Black College or University. The initiative responds to documented State and national shortages in veterinary professionals, particularly in agricultural, food-animal, poultry, and rural veterinary practice, as well as companion animal care.

The School of Veterinary Medicine is advancing through the multi-year accreditation process overseen by the American Veterinary Medical Association's Council on Education. Program planning emphasizes an accelerated three-year DVM curriculum, leveraging clinical partnerships across Maryland rather than construction of a standalone on-campus teaching hospital, reducing long-term infrastructure costs while expanding access to clinical training sites.

The School builds upon UMES's existing strengths as an 1890 land-grant HBCU, complementing established programs in agriculture, pharmacy, and health professions, and supports workforce development critical to Maryland's agricultural economy, food security, public health, and rural communities. Planning funds advance curricula, accreditation readiness, academic and clinical space planning, and integration with existing campus facilities as the program moves toward initial student enrollment.

FROSTBURG STATE UNIVERSITY (FSU)

Baseball Complex Infrastructure Improvements: \$100,000 for planning, construction, and equipment

PROJECT SUMMARY: Provides funds for infrastructure improvements to the Frostburg State University Baseball Complex, including installation of a fully artificial turf baseball field. The project enhances the existing athletic facility, reduces long-term maintenance costs associated with natural grass, and improves reliability and usability of the field for both intercollegiate competition and campus use.

COPPIN STATE UNIVERSITY (CSU)

New Residence Hall: \$2 million for construction

PROJECT SUMMARY: Provides funds for the construction of a new 350-bed residence hall on the Coppin State University campus. The facility is intended to address insufficient on-campus housing capacity, which has been identified as a barrier to student recruitment, retention, and the ability to host conferences and other major events. The residence hall provides modern residential space and is funded through a combination of auxiliary revenue bonds backed by dormitory fees and State general obligation bonds, with operating costs borne by the university.

UNIVERSITY OF BALTIMORE (UBalt)

101 W. Mt. Royal Avenue Acquisition: \$500,000 for acquisition

PROJECT SUMMARY: Acquisition of 101 W. Mount Royal Avenue supports implementation of the University of Baltimore's Facilities Master Plan by enabling consolidation of administrative and student-facing functions. The property is intended for use as a Welcome Center and administrative facility, supporting improved campus operations and public access while allowing future redevelopment of existing campus buildings. The General Assembly added preauthorization language to the bill to appropriate the remainder of the purchase price (\$7.1 million) in FY2028.

SALISBURY UNIVERSITY (SU)

Blackwell Hall Renovation: \$1.124 million for construction

PROJECT SUMMARY: The Blackwell Hall Renovation converts the former campus library into a centralized Student Services Center, consolidating multiple student support functions currently spread across campus. The renovated facility will house admissions, financial aid, advising, counseling, registrar, and dean of students offices, improving accessibility and service delivery. The project replaces obsolete building systems, upgrades accessibility, and incorporates geothermal and high-performance energy systems, positioning Blackwell Hall to become one of the first net-zero buildings in the University System of Maryland.

UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND GLOBAL CAMPUS (UMGC)

Adelphi Building Renovation: \$1 million for planning, construction, and equipment

PROJECT SUMMARY: Located at the nexus of the new Purple Line, UMGC is redefining the modern workplace with a "destination space" designed for a hybrid future. By transitioning to a flexible model of hoteling and shared offices, the university is achieving massive sustainability goals, slashing carbon emissions by 60% and removing over 7,600 kg of CO₂ from the atmosphere daily. While the full renovation timeline currently targets a 2029 start in the Governor's budget, early phases are already bringing state-of-the-art speaker-tracking technology to conference rooms, ensuring a seamless, equitable experience for both on-site and remote collaborators.

UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND, BALTIMORE COUNTY (UMBC)

Sherman Hall Renovation: \$9.087 million for construction and equipment

PROJECT SUMMARY: Sherman Hall Renovation modernizes a 44-year-old academic building that houses multiple colleges and administrative units. The project includes replacement of the failing building envelope, correction of accessibility barriers, and comprehensive upgrades to mechanical, electrical, plumbing, and life-safety systems. Renovations are being phased while the building remains occupied, addressing significant deferred maintenance and improving functionality, safety, and energy performance.

UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF MARYLAND OFFICE (USMO)

Colwell Center Deferred Maintenance: \$3.906 million for construction (including \$1 million in Academic Revenue Bonds)

PROJECT SUMMARY: The Colwell Center Deferred Maintenance project addresses critical building system failures and life-safety risks at the Rita Colwell Center, a systemwide facility that houses major USM academic, research, and administrative functions. The facility includes space for the Institute of Marine and Environmental Technology, the Office of the Chancellor, University partnerships, and affiliated research entities.

The project includes roof remediation, HVAC and central plant system upgrades, replacing obsolete chillers, controls, motors, and pumps for which replacement parts are increasingly unavailable, and improving energy efficiency and reliability.

Capital Facilities Renewal Program: \$24 million (Academic Revenue Bonds)

PROJECT SUMMARY: This systemwide renewal program addresses deferred maintenance and life-safety needs across USM academic facilities, protecting State investments and reducing long-term facility risk. The University System of Maryland annually surveys its institutions to assess the size and magnitude of the system's deferred maintenance and facilities renewal needs. The survey instrument has been revised in recent years to measure the backlog more precisely. Currently, institutions categorize deferred maintenance cost as either structural/envelope, mechanical/electrical systems, or life safety/regulatory. In addition, institutions report on costs associated with programmatic improvements which include renovations, remodeling, reconfiguration, modernization, and information technology/communications.

About Academic Revenue Bonds

The USM manages the debt issuance for each of the twelve member institutions, three regional higher education centers, and central office through a single, System-wide Revenue Bond program that provides funding for both state-supported academic projects, but also the capital needs of self-supporting activities like dorms, dining halls and athletics. Thorough strategic planning and financially responsible management has enabled the USM to maintain a Aa1/AA+ bond rating, which provides for bonds to be sold at a premium, with low interest rates, to finance all necessary projects without straining the USM's debt capacity.

[Senate Bill 769](#) – University System of Maryland – Academic Facilities Bonding Authority – authorizes the use of academic revenue bonds (ARBs) for the purpose of financing construction, renovation, and renewal projects at USM buildings. Similar legislation has been approved each year for the past 2 decades. The difference this year is that the Governor has asked the USM to provide an additional \$20M in ARB debt to replace funding that would have been GO Bonds in FY2027. The additional debt service required by this increase will be spread across all institutions as is the current practice. Specifically, the bill authorizes \$15 million in academic revenue bonds (ARB) for the new Health and Human Services Complex at the University of Maryland, College Park Campus, \$10M in ARB funds for Towson's Electrical Substation project, \$1M in ARB's for the Deferred Maintenance work at the Colwell Center; and \$24 million for facilities renewal on buildings across the system.

CAPITAL BUDGET SCORECARD APPENDIX: SEE PAGE 34

ADDITIONAL ACTIONS IN THE JOINT CHAIRMEN'S REPORT

BUDGET AMENDMENTS

In the [Joint Chairmen's Report](#), a budget amendment is a formal mechanism used to change the dollar amount or distribution of an appropriation after the annual budget has been enacted. A budget amendment allows the state to adjust previously approved appropriations during the fiscal year to reflect updated circumstances, such as revised revenue estimates, grant awards, or programmatic needs, while still operating within the legal framework of the enacted budget. In effect, budget amendments are how the enacted budget is modified administratively, rather than through passage of a new budget bill, and they are commonly tracked and explained in the Joint Chairmen's Report for legislative oversight purposes.

F50B04.02 Security

Add the following language to the general fund appropriation:

,provided that \$500,000 of this appropriation made for the purpose of general administration may not be expended until the Department of Information Technology (DoIT) submits a confidential report on cybersecurity governance to the Joint Audit and Evaluation Committee, the Chair and Subcommittee Chairs of the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee, the Chair and Subcommittee Chairs of the House Appropriations Committee, and the Joint Committee on Cybersecurity, Information Technology and Biotechnology. The confidential report shall be produced in a manner prescribed by the State Chief Information Security Officer (SCISO) and include details from: the Maryland Department of Health, the Maryland Department of Transportation, the Department of Human Services, the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services, and the Maryland Department of State Police.

In consultation with the SCISO, DoIT shall compile the data received from each department and the University System of Maryland into a consolidated confidential report. The report shall provide an update on implementation from each of the agencies of critical systems including: (1) information technology system access verification and dates of most recent review of all user access and related results; (2) malware protection, including procedures to ensure malware protection and the date of the most recent review of malware protection controls and the related results; (3) multi-factor authentication, including data of the most recent review of multi-factor authentication, and related results; (4) personally identifiable information (PII) protection for applications exceeding 5,000 unique records, procedures for ensuring PII encryption and the date of the most recent inventory and review of PII security; and (5) information technology service providers cloud activity, including procedures for ensuring external security assurances (System and Organization Controls (SOC) 2 Type 2 report) are obtained, the date of the most recent SOC 2 Type 2 report for each service provider and cloud service, and significant findings.

The report shall be submitted by December 15, 2026, and the budget committees shall have 45 days from the date of the receipt of the report to review and comment. Funds restricted pending submission of a report may not be transferred by budget amendment or otherwise to any other purpose and shall revert to the General Fund if the report is not submitted to the budget committees. It is the intent of the General Assembly that the report also be submitted concurrently to the Governor, the Chief of Staff, and Deputy Chief of Staff for the Governor.

EXPLANATION: Given the rapidly increasing cybersecurity attacks, and the cost associated with those attacks, the budget committees are concerned with the status of cybersecurity protections in the State. This action requires DoIT and SCISO to review protections for large State agencies and report on significant findings to relevant decision makers.

Information Request: Confidential cybersecurity governance report

Author: DoIT

Due Date: December 15, 2026

Q00B01.01 General Administration

Add the following language to the general fund appropriation:

,provided that \$150,000 of this appropriation made for the purpose of general administration may not be expended for that purpose and instead may be used only to conduct a comprehensive study, in collaboration with the University of Maryland, College Park (UMCP), examining correctional industry programs in Maine, Ohio, Kansas, and California. The study shall include recommendations on ways for Maryland Correctional Enterprises to improve reentry outcomes for incarcerated individuals returning to society. The Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services (DPSCS) shall submit a report to the budget committees by December 1, 2026, with findings and recommendations from the study. It is the intent of the General Assembly that DPSCS and UMCP submit a final report on the study, including findings and recommendations, to the Governor and budget committees by December 1, 2027. Funds not expended for this restricted purpose may not be transferred by budget amendment or otherwise to any other purpose and shall revert to the General Fund.

EXPLANATION: Maryland Correctional Enterprises (MCE) provides work and job training for incarcerated individuals in correctional facilities. This language restricts funding for general administration within DPSCS to instead be used to complete a study with UMCP on correctional industry programs in other states. The language requires DPSCS to make recommendations for how MCE can improve reentry outcomes and to submit a report to the budget committees on the study. This language also expresses the intent of the General Assembly that DPSCS and UMCP submit a final report on the results of the study by December 1, 2027.

Information Request: Report on the study of correctional industries and MCE reentry outcomes

Author: DPSCS

Due Date: December 1, 2026

R30B22.00 University of Maryland, College Park Campus

Add the following language to the current unrestricted fund appropriation:

Further provided that this appropriation made for the purpose of funding the State's Consumer Health Information Hub at the Herschel S. Horowitz Center for Health Literacy shall be reduced by \$350,000.

EXPLANATION: Chapter 679 of 2022 mandated funding of the Consumer Health Information Hub at the Herschel S. Horowitz Center for Health Literacy from fiscal 2022 through 2026. Though the mandate ended, funding was inadvertently included in the University of Maryland, College Park's appropriation for this hub.

R75T00.01 Support for State Operated Institutions of Higher Education

Add the following language to the general fund appropriation:

Further provided that this appropriation for R30B22 University of Maryland, College Park for the purpose of funding the State's Consumer Health Information Hub at the Herschel S. Horowitz Center for Health Literacy shall be reduced by \$350,000.

EXPLANATION: Chapter 679 of 2022 mandated funding of the Consumer Health Information Hub at the Herschel S. Horowitz Center for Health Literacy from fiscal 2022 through 2026. Though the mandate ended, funding was inadvertently included in the University of Maryland, College Park's appropriation for this hub.

Add the following section:

Section 19 Across-the-board Reductions and Higher Education

SECTION 19. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That all across-the-board reductions applied to the Executive Branch, unless otherwise stated, shall apply to current unrestricted and general funds in the University System of Maryland, St. Mary's College of Maryland, Morgan State University, and Baltimore City Community College.

EXPLANATION: This section explicitly applies reductions intended for the full Executive Branch to the University System of Maryland, St. Mary's College of Maryland, Morgan State University, and Baltimore City Community College unless their exclusion is specifically stated.

Add the following section:

Section 29 Annual Report on Authorized Positions

SECTION 29. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That immediately following the close of fiscal 2026, the Secretary of Budget and Management shall determine the total number of full-time equivalent (FTE) positions that are authorized as of the last day of fiscal 2026 and on the first day of fiscal 2027. Authorized positions shall include all positions authorized by the General Assembly in the personnel detail of the budgets for fiscal 2026 and 2027, including nonbudgetary programs, the Maryland Transportation Authority, the University System of Maryland self-supported activities, and Maryland Correctional Enterprises.

The Department of Budget and Management shall also prepare a report during fiscal 2027 for the budget committees upon creation of regular FTE positions through Board of Public Works action and upon transfer or abolition of positions. It shall note, at the program level:

- (1) where regular FTE positions have been abolished;
- (2) where regular FTE positions have been created;
- (3) from where and to where regular FTE positions have been transferred; and
- (4) where any other adjustments have been made. Provision of contractual FTE information in the same fashion as reported in the appendices of the Governor's Fiscal 2027 Budget Books shall also be provided.

Further provided that this report shall also be submitted as an appendix with the Governor's Fiscal 2028 Budget Books, and that the report shall provide information that is consistent with information in the individual agency pages of the Budget Books and with data provided to the Department of Legislative Services.

EXPLANATION: This annual language provides reporting requirements for regular positions and contractual FTEs.

Information Request: Report on the creation, transfer, or abolition of regular positions

Author: DBM

Due Date: With the Governor's fiscal 2028 budget submission and as needed

Section 23 Interagency Agreements

SECTION 23. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That on or before August 1, 2026, each State agency and each public institution of higher education shall report to the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) any agreements in place for any part of fiscal 2026 between State agencies and any public institution of higher education involving potential expenditures in excess of \$100,000 over the term of the agreement. Further provided that DBM shall provide direction and guidance to all State agencies and public institutions of higher education as to the procedures and specific elements of data to be reported with respect to these interagency agreements, to include at a minimum: (1) a common code for each interagency agreement that specifically identifies each agreement and the fiscal year in which the agreement began; (2) the starting date for each agreement; (3) the ending date for each agreement; (4) a total potential expenditure, or not-to-exceed dollar amount, for the services to be rendered over the term of the agreement by any public institution of higher education to any State agency; (5) a description of the nature of the goods and services to be provided; (6) the total number of personnel, both full- and part-time, associated with the agreement; (7) contact information for the agency and the public institution of higher education for the person(s) having direct oversight or knowledge of the agreement; Sections Joint Chairmen's Report – Operating Budget, April 2026 294 (8) total indirect cost recovery or facilities and administrative (F&A) expenditures authorized for the agreement; (9) the indirect cost recovery or F&A rate for the agreement and brief description of how the rate was determined; (10) actual expenditures for the most recently closed fiscal year; (11) actual base expenditures that the indirect cost recovery or F&A rate may be applied against during the most recently closed fiscal year; (12) actual expenditures for indirect cost recovery or F&A for the most recently closed fiscal year; and (13) total authorized expenditures for any subaward(s) or subcontract(s) being used as part of the agreement and a brief description of the type of award or contract.

Further provided that DBM shall submit a consolidated report to the budget committees and the Department of Legislative Services by December 1, 2026, that contains information on all agreements between State agencies

and any public institution of higher education involving potential expenditures in excess of \$100,000 that were in effect at any time during fiscal 2026.

Further provided that no new higher education interagency agreement with State agencies with a projected value in excess of \$500,000 may be entered into during fiscal 2027 without prior approval of the Secretary of Budget and Management. Explanation: This annual language requires DBM to report on all interagency agreements between State agencies and public institutions of higher education having a total potential expenditure over the term of the agreement in excess of \$100,000. This applies only to agreements for the purchase of goods and/or services and does not apply to grants or space agreements. Further, it requires that no new higher education interagency agreement with State agencies with a projected value in excess of \$500,000 be entered into during fiscal 2027 without prior approval of the Secretary of Budget and Management.

Information Request: Consolidated report on interagency agreements

Author: DBM

Due Date: December 1, 2026

\$27,000,000 in special funds from the State Lottery Fund are added within the Maryland Stadium Authority for the following uses:

(a) \$18,000,000 to the appropriation for program D28A03.41 General Administration for the purpose of a grant to the Maryland Economic Development Corporation (MEDCO) for the purpose of a mixed use development that includes a soccer stadium at the University of Maryland, College Park. It is the intent of the General Assembly that any project developed using these funds include a mixed use portion and that it will operate 363 days of the year and complement the growth of College Park and Prince George's County. It is the intent of the General Assembly that the project receive private sector investment of at least \$40 million in project costs;

COMMITTEE NARRATIVE

At times, the budget committees wish to express legislative intent or request USM to perform certain studies or report on particular issues during the interim. This is usually written as "committee narrative" in the Joint Chairmen's report of the budget committees' action. Committee narrative does not have the effect of law nor does it require agreement to the language on the part of the entire House and Senate. However, both budget committees must agree on the wording. Several items fall under the title of "Committee Narrative" providing the intent of the General Assembly that USM performs certain actions in the form of reports or studies into relevant issues. The report included the following items as Committee Narrative.

Institutional Faculty Workload Report: The committees request that the University System of Maryland (USM), Morgan State University (MSU), and St. Mary's College of Maryland (SMCM) continue to provide annual instructional workload reports for tenured/tenure-track faculty. By focusing on these faculty, the committees gain a sense of the teaching activities for the regular core faculty. However, there are other types of instructional faculty at institutions such as full- and part-time nontenured/nontenure-track faculty, including adjunct faculty, instructors, and lecturers. Focusing on only tenured/tenure-track faculty provides an incomplete picture of how students are taught. Therefore, the report should also include the instructional workload when all types of faculty are considered. Additional information may be included at the institution's discretion. Furthermore, the USM report should include the percent of faculty meeting or exceeding teaching standards for tenured/tenure-track faculty for the University of Maryland, Baltimore Campus.

Information Request: Annual report on faculty workload

Author: USM, MSU, SMCM

Due Date: December 15, 2026

UMGC Ventures and AccelerEd's Reintegration: Since June 13, 2025, the University of Maryland Global Campus (UMGC) has been reintegrating UMGC Ventures and AccelerEd, its former information technology (IT) office that was spun-off as a High Impact Economic Development Activity. The committees are interested in better understanding the progress of the reintegration and request UMGC submit a report containing the following information as of December 1, 2026:

- the timeline for hiring, including the date hiring began;
- the number of vacant IT positions, including employee class title;
- the status of contracts AccelerEd used for its operations, including if these contracts will continue after reintegration;
- the status of revenue-generating contracts AccelerEd had, including if these contracts will continue after reintegration;
- any recoveries related to the original seed investment in AccelerEd and UMGC Ventures and an explanation for why, if some or all funds were not recovered;
- a complete list of UMGC Ventures' assets and any assets that have been sold since UMGC Ventures began operations, including the price and date of the sale; and
- the status of transferring UMGC Ventures' ownership in HelioCampus to UMGC.

Information Request: Report on Ventures and AccelerEd's Reintegration

Author: UMGC

Due Date: December 1, 2026

L00A12.10 Marketing and Agriculture Development

Maryland Native Plants Program Report: The committees are interested in the status of the Maryland Native Plants Program. Therefore, the committees request that the Maryland Department of Agriculture (MDA), in collaboration with the University of Maryland Extension at the University of Maryland, College Park Campus, submit a report on the Maryland Native Plants Program by October 1, 2026. The report shall include information on Maryland Native Plants Program goals, accomplishments, target audience, marketing efforts, and overall impact.

Information Request: Maryland Native Plants Program report

Author: MDA

Due Date: October 1, 2026

Sphere Workforce Needs Assessment: The budget committees request that the Maryland Department of Labor (MD Labor), in collaboration with Prince George's County Public Schools (PGCPS), Prince George's County Community College (PGCC), Bowie State University, and the Prince George's County Workforce Development Board, submit a report on how the State can best support development of the Sphere entertainment venue planned for Prince George's County. The report should include:

- the types of jobs that will be needed both in the construction and operation of the Sphere;
- any gaps that exist in existing apprenticeship, certification, and degree programs;
- opportunities for collaboration between MD Labor and Prince George's County's education institutions to support the workforce needs of the Sphere; and
- a plan to create appropriate programs to meet the workforce needs of the Sphere.

Information Request: Report on Sphere workforce needs MD Labor

Author: PGCPS, PGCC, Bowie State University, Prince George's County Workforce Development Board

Due Date: December 15, 2026

Data Collection for the Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Support Services (IECMHSS)

Program: Until fiscal 2025, the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) contracted with the University of Maryland School of Social Work to collect statewide data on the IECMHSS Program. The data included information on the demographics of children served, consultations with child care staff and parents or caregivers, program locations, outcomes related to behavioral health, and consultant demographics and salaries. These data were compiled into reports for MSDE and shared with the General Assembly and stakeholders to support program monitoring and quality improvement. MSDE did not renew this contract in fiscal 2025. Although some data are currently collected by the nine IECMHSS programs, the data is not collected consistently across the State and is not reported publicly. The committees request that MSDE submit a report describing how the department is currently collecting these data and include statewide information on the program data previously collected under the contract with the University of Maryland School of Social Work.

Information Request: Report on IECMHSS Program data collection

Author: MSDE

Due Date: August 1, 2026



FINAL STATUS OF BILLS:

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In a Legislative Session that saw almost 2,700 bills filed, the USM Office of Government Relations assessed the impact of over 300 individual bills that would have had varying impacts on the system, its faculty, staff and students. Working closely with the USM State Relations Council and often with our colleagues across all sectors of education, USM provided testimony on more than 50 bills. Importantly, the USM and the State Relations Council succeeded in holding dozens of bills from passage that would have imposed additional administrative, regulatory or fiscal impact on the USM. At the same time, USM showed support for legislation addressing critical needs on our campuses. From support for Early College pathways, additional accommodations for students, volunteering for a climate study to leading an AI Partnership with the State. The USM remained fully engaged in advocating for specific legislation right up until the last few minutes of the legislative session.



ACADEMIC AND STUDENT AFFAIRS

[SB 420 \(HB 6\)](#)

Public Institutions of Higher Education – Pregnant and Parenting Students – Plan and Reporting

USM Position: Letter of Information
Status: Passed

SB 420 directs the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) to collect data regarding the parental status of students from each public institution of higher education; establish a common format and timeframe for the collection; and report the findings on or before September 1, 2027 to the House Appropriations Committee as well as the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee and Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee. Institutions must also post plans for pregnant and parenting students that are consistent with Title IX of the federal Higher Education Act by October 1, 2026.

The bills expand the existing requirement for institutions to adopt a plan regarding pregnant and parenting students that is aligned with Title IX – by expanding the definition of “pregnant and parenting student” and extending the requirement to community colleges. Prior law applied only to public senior higher education institutions, with limited exceptions (specifically for UMGC, the University of Baltimore, and the University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science).

House Bill 6 retains the exception for these three institutions, whereas Senate Bill 420 does not – so that they, in addition to community colleges, are subject to the requirement. The bills modify the timeline for institutions required to adopt such a plan and post it on their website to October 1, 2026.

The institutions within the USM fully recognize and uphold the rights of pregnant and parenting students under Title IX and allow pregnant students to request academic accommodations through designated support offices, addressing circumstances on a case-by-case basis in alignment with ADA requirements. This approach ensures flexibility for the unique and time-sensitive nature of pregnancy and related conditions, without the administrative delays inherent in statewide policy updates.

The U.S. Department of Education’s Office for Civil Rights enforces Title IX, which prohibits sex-based discrimination in federally funded education programs and explicitly protects pregnant and parenting students. This includes safeguarding their right to remain enrolled and receive equal access during pregnancy, childbirth, recovery, and related conditions. Strengthening awareness and compliance at the institutional level aligns with shared goals of increasing completion rates and fostering student success.



SB 421 (HB 60)

Sickle Cell Disease – Institutions of Higher Education – Policies, Procedures, and Educational Campaigns (Kaitlyn’s Law)

**USM Position: Support with Amendment
Status: Did Not Pass**

SB 421/HB 60 would have prohibited an institution of higher education from denying access or services to a student based on the student’s diagnosis of sickle cell disease (SCD) and requires an institution to provide reasonable accommodation for students with SCD. USM institutions are already bound by Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Title III (for private entities), and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, which prohibit disability discrimination and require campuses to furnish reasonable accommodations and auxiliary aids so students can access programs and services. These laws all require reporting mechanisms for violations. USM policy mirrors these obligations and the USM Board of Regents Policy VI-1.00 prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability and requires compliance with federal and state law.

The System Office maintains written ADA accommodation procedures underscoring confidentiality and the interactive process – policies that guide campus student affairs and disability services operations today.



[SB 529 \(HB 479\)](#)

Southern Maryland Early College Teacher Pathway Program and Program Workgroup – Establishment

USM Position: Support

Status: Passed

SB 529/HB 479 takes an important step toward building a Southern Maryland Early College Teacher Pathway by establishing the Program Workgroup and directing the USM and stakeholders to develop recommendations for the pathway and corresponding teacher preparation program.

In Southern Maryland, too many students face real barriers to higher education, particularly students who are low-income, first-generation, or historically underrepresented in higher education. For many of these students, the challenge is not ability. It is affordability, access, and the absence of a clear path from high school to college and into a career. USM data demonstrates that students in traditional dual enrollment programs with no clear pathway transfer far less credits than made possible by the Blueprint for Maryland’s future. Moreover, traditional dual enrollment programs have not been successful in expanding access to under-resourced students. This data suggests that a more strategic approach is required.

Strong pathways do not happen on their own and require deliberate planning, coordination, and shared ownership across K–12, higher education, and state leadership. SB 529 creates the structure to do that work well by bringing together the institutions and regional stakeholders needed to design a coherent, credit-bearing pathway into teaching.

Maryland needs a more diverse and robust teaching workforce, and Southern Maryland needs stronger local pipelines into the profession. A structured Early College teacher pathway will help students begin preparing to teach earlier, stay connected to their home communities, and move into careers without having to leave the region to obtain a bachelor’s degree.



[SB 709 \(HB 623\)](#)

Education – Purple Star Schools Program and Purple Star Colleges Program

USM Position: Support

Status: Passed

SB 709/HB 623 strengthens Maryland’s commitment to military-connected students by modernizing definitions within the existing Purple Star Schools Program and creating a new Purple Star Colleges Program to recognize institutions of higher education that provide exemplary support to military-connected learners.

This proposal updates the definition of “military-connected student” under current law and establishes a statewide framework for identifying and elevating colleges that demonstrate strong, intentional services for service members, veterans, and their families. The bill ensures consistent terminology across Maryland statutes and creates a voluntary recognition program to highlight institutions that excel in transitioning, advising, and supporting military-connected students.

[SB 243 \(HB 721\)](#)

Uniformed Services Spouses Act

USM Position: Support

Status: Passed

SB 243/HB 721 expands existing Maryland laws that provide priority course registration, support services, and scholarship access so that these benefits also apply to the spouses of active-duty servicemembers and veterans. The bill’s intention is to ensure that military spouses receive equitable access to higher-education and employment resources across Maryland.

The USM already demonstrates strong leadership in serving military-connected students and their families, and this legislation further reinforces and expands this support. The University of Maryland Global Campus (UMGC) is specifically dedicated to serving working adults, military servicemembers, veterans, and their families—including military spouses—through flexible online, hybrid, and in-person programs designed to accommodate frequent relocations and unpredictable schedules. Likewise, the University of Maryland, Baltimore (UMB) offers award-winning academic programs and targeted services that address the unique needs of active-duty servicemembers, veterans, and military spouses, including financial-aid guidance, institutional policies aligned with federal protections, and comprehensive support resources.

HB 214

Higher Education – Academic Forgiveness Policy – Established

USM Position: Opposed

Status: Did Not Pass

HB 214 would have required USM institutions to develop and implement an academic forgiveness policy to disregard an applicant's unsatisfactory or failing grades earned at a prior institution more than seven years before an individual applies for admission.

USM supported the spirit of this bill. Our institutions already have processes that account for previous academic work – including academic failure – in their admissions and readmissions processes. Applicants are reviewed holistically, and a prior failure does not preclude admission. Procedures vary from institution to institution, depending on institutional mission and potentially upon the program and the circumstances and details of the prior record. One failure of a particularly challenging course or failures during a particular period of time sandwiched by periods of success could be different from a steady series of failures, including at an introductory level. The bill would require all failures to be ignored equally.

USM institutions also have academic clemency or forgiveness policies and procedures. These academic forgiveness policies may vary by level (undergraduate, graduate, professional) or by program.

SB 207 (HB 231)

Higher Education – Guaranteed Access Grant Program – Applicability

USM Position: Support

Status: Passed

SB207/HB231 delays the decentralization of the Guaranteed Access Grant Program until the 2029-2030 financial aid award year. USM supported this bill.

Delay of the implementation year provides more time for collaborative efforts to shape a clear and sensible Guaranteed Access Grant program process that better addresses student and State needs and institutional capacity. The Commission's Financial Aid Advisory Council includes representatives from all higher education segments and has a role in working with the

State Department of Education on district outreach. That group's charge to provide counsel on matters of policy could be a good vehicle for working towards a new process that helps to award student aid sooner and more predictably.

HB 818

Higher Education – Foster Care Recipients and Homeless Youth – Tuition Exemption and Associated Benefits

USM Position: Letter of Information

Status: Did Not Pass

HB 818 would have expand Maryland's existing tuition-and-fee waiver for eligible foster care recipients and homeless youth by requiring public institutions to also cover room and board (including off-campus allowances), required books, course materials, supplies, and equipment. The bill would have converted today's tuition and mandatory fee waiver into a full cost-of-attendance benefit for covered students, with institutions funding the difference after other grants and scholarships are applied.

The fiscal impact on USM campuses would have doubled the costs of the current waiver programs and an additional \$7 million would have been required to support about 450 of USM's undergraduates.



[SB 430 \(HB 538\)](#)

Institutions of Higher Education – Mandatory Disclosures for New and Prospective Students (Informed Enrollment Act)

USM Position: Monitor

Status: Did Not Pass

SB 430/HB 538 would have required each institution of higher education to publicize College Scorecard information on its website and in certain publications, as well as to share this information with current and prospective students in several prescribed ways.

This bill largely aligned with practices of our institutions and their efforts to make prospective and current students aware of what their institutions offer in the way of programs, what their programs cost, what kind of outcomes students can expect, and what typical student debt is for those leaving the institution. Institutions take seriously the obligation to ensure that students and their families understand this information prior to enrollment. Currently, the College Scorecard of the US Department of Education aggregates in the Scorecard information the institutions provide through collections to the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), as well as data it has through the Department’s National Student Loan Data System (NSLDS).

[SB 324 \(HB 700\)](#)

Higher Education – Public Senior Higher Education Institutions – Direct Admission Program

USM Position: Monitor

Status: Passed

SB 324/HB 700 establishes a statewide Direct Admission Program for Maryland’s public senior higher education institutions, explicitly including the University System of Maryland (USM), Morgan State University, and St. Mary’s College of Maryland. Under the bill, eligible Maryland high school students who meet defined college- and career-readiness criteria and complete required coursework would receive a *“conditional offer of admission”* to participating institutions without going through a traditional selective admissions review. The program will be administered by the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) through the State’s financial

aid platform and the Common Application, and participating institutions must waive application fees for direct-admission applicants. Importantly for USM campuses, direct admission guarantees entry to the institution but *“...does not guarantee admission to a particular major, school, or competitive program...,”* preserving campus-level academic placement decisions.

The bill delays the initial implementation to the 2028–2029 academic year and replaces a rigid statutory reliance on the existing College and Career Readiness (CCR) standard with a more flexible framework. It also requires MHEC, the Maryland State Department of Education, and public senior institutions of higher education to jointly establish eligibility requirements through a formal memorandum of understanding. At a minimum, those requirements must include completion of CCR coursework and a minimum high school GPA, but the structure allows USM and other institutions to collectively shape standards rather than having them fixed in statute.

Finally, the amended bill adds a required study on program administration, directing MHEC, in consultation with MSDE, to evaluate how the Direct Admission Program is implemented. The General Assembly seeks ongoing assessment before long-term expansion or refinement. The fiscal analysis suggest that state administrative costs will increase to support the program, but **participation by individual institutions remains optional**, meaning USM can calibrate involvement campus by campus.



[SB 983 \(HB 1628\)](#)

Higher Education – Academic Program Approval – Objections Process Alteration and Study

USM Position: Letter of Information

Status: Did Not Pass

This bill would have repealed for a year the requirement that a proposed new academic program would have to be at the graduate level for the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) or an institution of higher education to file an objection to the proposed program's implementation. It would have also required the Program Review Process Advisory Council (PRPAC) within MHEC to study and make recommendations on extending the objection process for proposed academic programs to include new undergraduate programs.

MHEC has been convening the PRPAC for a year. The PRPAC membership includes the leadership of our state's public and independent segments of higher education, including HBI leaders who have a particular stake in the effective and legally compliant management of the program review process. MHEC and this Council are engaged in ongoing work to account for the State's workforce needs, while being mindful that Maryland is not best served by highly similar programs addressing similar student populations. Current law narrows duplication objections to graduate and professional programs.

MHEC has introduced new program approval processes, especially for graduate and professional programs. These processes require further time and attention to enhance their effectiveness.

[HB 1277](#)

Education - Maryland Institute for Literacy and Equity – Establishment

USM Position: Support

Status: Did Not Pass

HB 1277 would have established the Maryland Institute for Literacy and Equity (MILE) as a state-funded research and technical assistance center jointly operated by the University of Maryland,

College Park and Morgan State University to advance literacy across the state. It also would have required the Governor to include annual appropriations to both universities and the Institute to support its operations and statewide literacy initiatives.

Literacy is foundational to academic success, workforce readiness, and civic participation. While Maryland has made progress in improving student outcomes, recent results from the Maryland Comprehensive Assessment Program (MCAP) illustrate the continued urgency of this work. In the 2024–2025 school year, approximately 50% of Maryland students were proficient in English Language Arts, meaning nearly half of Maryland students are not yet reading at grade level.

It is essential, going forward, that MILE be supported through dedicated state funding with a stable, non-lapsing fund. Predictable funding is especially critical for initiatives that involve multi-year research agendas, professional development programs, and coordinated implementation across multiple public institutions.

[HB 1311](#)

Higher Education – Student Financial Assistance for Incarcerated Individuals – Alterations

USM Position: Support

Status: Did Not Pass

HB 1311 would have required the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services to assist incarcerated individuals in accessing both federal and state student financial assistance and ensures that individuals who meet eligibility requirements are able to receive this aid. It also directed DPSCS to work collaboratively with the Maryland Higher Education Commission and institutions of higher education – including all USM institutions – to facilitate access to Pell Grants and state financial aid programs.

HB 1311 would have strengthened Maryland's commitment to educational equity and successful community reintegration and builds upon the USM's leadership as a national model for higher education in correctional settings.

HB 1313

Higher Education – Tuition Exemption – Incarcerated Individuals

USM Position: Letter of Information
Status: Did Not Pass

HB 1313 would have exempted incarcerated individuals from paying tuition at public institutions of higher education. The bill also sought to expand educational access by allowing eligible incarcerated learners to enroll in credit-bearing and noncredit coursework without absorbing tuition costs, with financial aid applied first and any remaining balance covered through the exemption.

The USM affirmed the rehabilitative value of higher education – particularly for justice-involved learners – and recognized that HB 1313 aligns with Maryland’s broader expansion of prison education opportunities. At the same time, the bill carries significant fiscal considerations for USM institutions. HB 1313’s tuition exemption places the remaining financial responsibility squarely on institutions once all applicable aid is exhausted.

Across the USM, the magnitude of these impacts varied, but it was clear that universities would have been responsible for filling any financial gaps for these students, requiring close coordination among financial aid, finance, student accounts, and philanthropy to identify funding sources. Without designated state support, institutional funds would have had to cover unmet tuition balances for incarcerated learners participating under the exemption.



HB 1530

Higher Education – Undocumented Students – Out of State Tuition Exemption Eligibility

USM Position: Support with Amendment
Status: Passed

Effective July 1, HB1530 reduces the number of years (from three to two) for which an individual or an individual’s parent or guardian must file a Maryland income tax return prior to the academic year in order to qualify for an exemption from paying the out-of-state tuition rate under the Maryland Dream Act.

USM supports accurate verification practices and appreciated the intent of HB 1530 to support student access. There were some challenges, however. The bill, as drafted, tied eligibility for in-state tuition (as an exemption from paying out-of-state tuition) to explicit proof of Maryland residency, including through a Maryland address appearing on income tax filings. A direct residency-based standard would have raised significant federal compliance concerns. Federal law prohibits states from granting benefits – such as in-state tuition – on the basis of state residency in situations where certain non-citizens could qualify based on residency, but U.S. citizens who cannot prove residency would be excluded. To avoid this prohibition, states have structured (non-resident) in-state tuition eligibility around criteria other than residency, such as high school attendance, high school graduation, or other neutral measures. Maryland’s existing non-resident tuition exemption framework has followed this approach for precisely this reason.

Again, as introduced, HB 1530 would have eliminated the tax-filing condition altogether, significantly broadening eligibility for the in-state tuition benefit. The final bill reflects a more targeted policy approach, balancing expanded access with continued verification requirements.



HB 649

Advancing Equal Educational Opportunities for All Students in Maryland

USM Position: Letter of Information Status: Did Not Pass

HB 649 sought to expand statewide protections against discrimination and retaliation in educational settings by granting the Maryland Commission on Civil Rights (MCCR) direct investigative and enforcement authority, creating a private right of action, and establishing concurrent jurisdiction alongside existing education-related enforcement bodies. The USM respected the bill's intent and engaged in good faith with the supporters in the interim, and suggested amendments to align the bill more closely with existing federal and state frameworks and to clearly define the scope of remedies and enforcement authority available to MCCR. This was particularly in light of uncertainty surrounding federal complaint processes but raised several implementation concerns that warranted careful consideration.

Although the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights (OCR) had reduced capacity, it remained operational and continued to enforce federal civil rights statutes applicable to educational institutions, including Title VI, Title IX, Section 504, the Age Discrimination Act, and Title II of the ADA. USM institutions remained subject to these requirements and continued to engage with OCR on active matters. As such, USM questioned what specific gap in existing enforcement or complaint-resolution mechanisms the bill was intended to address.

USM also expressed concern that the bill did not clearly align with well-established legal distinctions between employment discrimination claims and non-employment claims arising in educational settings. The bill's broad prohibition on discriminatory educational practices could have been interpreted to encompass employees, despite employment discrimination already being comprehensively addressed under Maryland's Fair Employment Practices Act (MFEPA), which closely mirrors Title VII. USM emphasized the importance of clarifying that MFEPA remained the exclusive state remedy for employment discrimination claims.

Additionally, the bill did not specify standards for civil liability or limits on remedies for discriminatory educational practices. Federal analogues such as Title VI and Title IX imposed thresholds such as intentional discrimination or deliberate indifference and limited damages, including the exclusion of noneconomic damages like emotional distress. HB 649 identified no such standards or limitations. The bill also omitted a statute of limitations, creating potential uncertainty that did not exist under MFEPA.

USM institutions noted that they had invested significantly over the past decade in building compliance infrastructures tailored to evolving federal and state civil rights obligations. By contrast, USM was unaware of any corresponding expansion of MCCR staffing or specialized expertise related to educational discrimination, particularly Title IX. In the absence of additional resources or clearer statutory guardrails, USM cautioned that MCCR could have faced an unmanageable volume of complaints and that institutions could have been required to both defend complex matters and educate the enforcing agency on higher-education-specific regulatory requirements.

The bill's requirement that the USM Board of Regents refer discrimination complaints to MCCR raised further concerns. Although HB 649 applied broadly to public and private institutions statewide, this reporting obligation applied only to USM, potentially resulting in inconsistent procedural treatment for students depending on where they were enrolled. The provision also did not clearly define which complaints were subject to referral, whether institutions could first address complaints internally, or how duplicative, unsupported, or frivolous complaints would be handled. As drafted, the requirement could have resulted in the referral of matters already under investigation or litigation, further increasing demand on MCCR.

USM expressed its willingness to continue working constructively with policymakers to advance Maryland's commitment to equitable educational environments in a manner that was effective, fair, and administratively sustainable. When combined with ongoing federal investigations or private litigation, USM believed this structure could have significantly increased procedural complexity, litigation exposure, and institutional costs.

[HB 807](#)

Teacher Preparation Programs - English Language Learner Teacher Competency Requirements

USM Position: Letter of Information

Status: Did Not Pass

HB 807 would have required teacher preparation programs to include specific English Language Learner (ELL)–related teacher competencies across coursework and, beginning in the 2028–2029 academic year, mandate at least one standalone three-credit course in teaching English language learners.

USM educator preparation programs intentionally embed English learner–related competencies across coursework and field experiences, rather than isolating language development into a single class. Candidates apply language acquisition theory within literacy methods courses; integrate scaffolding strategies in mathematics and science methods; practice culturally and linguistically responsive classroom management; and engage in supervised clinical practice in diverse classrooms.

Under COMAR 13A.07.02, approved educator preparation programs must ensure candidates demonstrate competency in differentiation of instruction, cultural competence, instructional strategies to support diverse learning, data-informed instruction, and clinical experiences that prepare candidates for diverse school contexts. In addition, the Maryland Professional Teaching Standards (MPTS) require teachers to demonstrate knowledge of students, including linguistic and cultural backgrounds, and to implement equitable instructional practices that support language development and academic achievement. National accreditors, including the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP), likewise require educator preparation programs to provide evidence that candidates can teach diverse P–12 learners, including English learners, and can apply research-based instructional strategies to support language acquisition within content instruction.

Because of these mandates, English language development, equitable literacy practices, culturally and linguistically responsive pedagogy, and family engagement are already embedded throughout teacher preparation curricula across USM institutions. Candidates must demonstrate competency in these

areas multiple times and across clinical and content settings prior to recommendation for licensure.

Adding an additional three-credit requirement may extend time to degree, increase tuition and debt burden for students, and create scheduling conflicts with already tightly sequenced programs like those in secondary STEM and special education licensure areas.

[SB 809 \(HB 1280\)](#)

Supporting Our Caregiver Infrastructure Program - Feasibility Study

USM Position: Monitor

Status: Passed

The bill requires the University of Maryland, College Park (UMCP), with assistance from DHS, to study and make recommendations on the feasibility of establishing and operating a Supporting Our Caregiver Infrastructure Program to provide universal monthly payments to a caregiver for each dependent for whom a caregiver provides care. UMCP must explore the appropriate amounts for caregiver stipends that maximize the benefit to the State economy and minimize the fiscal impact on the State budget. UMCP, in consultation with the Office of the Comptroller, must examine the economic impact on the State and local economies, including potential increased labor force participation; enhanced tax revenues; potential decreased participation in public benefits programs in the State; and the overall economic vitality of the State. By July 1, 2028, UMCP must submit a final report of its findings, conclusions, and recommendations to specified committees of the General Assembly.



[SB 645 \(HB 1192\)](#)

State Board of Sign Language Interpreters - Membership and Licensing

USM Position: Support with Amendment

Status: Passed

The bill expands and restructures the State Board of Sign Language Interpreters, and broadens representation to include underrepresented Deaf, DeafBlind, and interpreter communities. Each USM institution relies heavily on high-quality, campus-embedded interpreters and interpreter-training pathways to fulfill federal ADA obligations and to support Deaf and hard-of-hearing students, faculty, staff, and community partners.

Currently, USM institutions face difficulty recruiting and retaining qualified interpreters, particularly for specialized academic disciplines. As amended, SB 645 would promote consistency while not unintentionally narrowing the available pool of interpreters and increasing costs or delays in service provision. In its final form, SB 645 requires public entities to provide reasonable accommodations to support the preferences indicated by the deaf and hard of hearing individuals *“...to the extent practicable and in compliance with 28 C.F.R. § 35.160 and the federal Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.”* That amendment, along with a January 1, 2028 implementation date helps ensure the new law does not create significant challenges for colleges and universities that rely on interpreters to ensure communication access for Deaf and Hard of Hearing students, faculty, staff, and visitors.



ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE

SB 316 (HB 109)

Institutions of Higher Education and Elementary and Secondary Schools - Title VI Coordinators

USM Position: Letter of Information

Status: Did Not Pass

SB 316/HB 109 would have required institutions of higher education to designate a coordinator to ensure compliance with Title VI of the federal Civil Rights Act of 1964. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 is widely regarded as landmark legislation that prohibits discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, and national origin. Title VI of the Act specifically protects individuals from discrimination based on race, color, and national origin in programs and activities that receive federal financial assistance.

In some cases, Title VI complaints are managed by the Title IX coordinator. At other institutions, these responsibilities fall to roles such as the assistant vice president for equity and civil rights, fair practices officers, assistant vice president for student success, or, when employees are involved, the chief human resources officer. Staff in these positions often also provide strategic leadership on compliance with all categories covered by institutional discrimination and harassment policies and procedures.

USM was concerned with language in the bill that would require the governing board of each institution of higher education to “designate a Title VI Coordinator.” The USM asserted that the responsibility should rest with each individual campus, not the governing board, which in this case is the Board of Regents. Moreover, USM institutions already have clear, standardized processes for handling Title VI complaints. These procedures are guided by non-discrimination policies and related protocols. Complaints can be submitted through staff contacts (via phone or a central email address), online reporting forms, or hotlines. Anonymous complaints are accepted, though they are more difficult to investigate. When the complainant is known, staff conduct an intake meeting to gather all relevant information for assessment.

Complaints involving non-students are handled similarly, by multiple offices – such as the president’s office, student affairs, human resources, and equity/civil rights – across campuses, and is shared in policies, during orientation, and often annually via email to the entire campus community. While there are no federal training requirements, USM institutions provide – and in some cases mandate – Title VI or non-discrimination training for various campus groups.

SB 7 (HB 720)

Higher Education – Douglas J. J. Peters Veterans of the Afghanistan and Iraq Conflicts Scholarship – Repeal of Termination Date

USM Position: Support

Status: Passed

SB7/HB 720 repeals language preventing the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) from issuing an initial Douglas J.J. Peters Veterans of the Afghanistan and Iraq Conflicts Scholarship award after June 30, 2030. The bill takes effect July 1, 2026.

Currently, veterans and active-duty members of the U.S. Armed Forces who served in Afghanistan and Iraq, and members of the reserve or Maryland National Guard who were activated as a result of the conflicts, are eligible for the scholarships, as are their children, stepchildren, and spouses.

Douglas J.J. Peters had a long and distinguished tenure in the Maryland Senate, coupled with his decorated service in the U.S. military, where his valor during Operation Desert Storm earned him the Bronze Star. Senator Peters also served as a valued member of the USM Board of Regents. Regent Peters left the Senate actively seeking a way to sustain his enormous impact on the citizens of Maryland and the strength of our state. As a USM regent, he was a steadfast advocate for our students, and in a fitting tribute that made him tremendously proud, the Maryland General Assembly named for him a scholarship awarded to students who served our country during the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

[SB 628 \(HB 877\)](#)

Institutions of Postsecondary Education – Institutional Debt – Report

USM Position: Opposed

Status: Did Not Pass

SB 628/HB 877 would have required colleges and universities to regularly report detailed information on their debt obligations to the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC). Specifically, the bill would have mandated biennial reporting beginning in 2027 and directed MHEC to establish a standardized data dictionary to address the scale, structure, and trends of institutional borrowing within the State's postsecondary education system. Joint testimony submitted by, USM, Maryland Independent College and University Association (MICUA) institutions, and the Maryland Association of Community Colleges (MACC) explained how higher education has faced an unprecedented wave of regulatory changes including the implementation of the One Big Beautiful Bill Act (OBBA) affecting Pell Grants and student loan prorations, the elimination of Graduate PLUS loans, the conclusion of FAFSA simplification with the A1-3 audit, and the decentralization – and recentralization – of the Maryland Guaranteed Access Grant. The landscape of student aid is being fundamentally reshaped. Each new reporting requirement adds layers of operational complexity, compounding the challenges for compliance, systems, and staffing.

The bill also included language authorizing the MHEC to impose up to \$10,000 in civil penalties against an institution that fails to submit a report or knowingly provides inaccurate information in the report. No other higher education reporting requirements carries such a punitive penalty and it fundamentally shifts the relationship between MHEC and institutions.

[SB 509](#)

Higher Education – Workforce Pell Grant Program – Implementation

USM Position: Monitored

Status: Passed

SB 509 implements the federal Workforce Pell Grant Program in Maryland that allows eligible students to use Pell Grants for approved short-term workforce training programs, rather than limiting aid to traditional degree pathways. In its final form, the bill places approval authority with the Governor, acting in consultation with the Governor's Workforce Development Board (GWDB), to set clear eligibility criteria for short-term programs and registered apprenticeships, authorizes oversight, data collection, and fee assessment by the Workforce Development Board and the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC), and requires annual reporting to the General Assembly to promote transparency and accountability as the program takes effect on June 1, 2026.

SB 509 has limits on how approved short-term programs may be structured and delivered. Participating institutions must retain primary responsibility for instruction and program administration, may not engage third-party partners that are paid through incentive-based or revenue-sharing arrangements, and may not align with private lenders or income-sharing entities to finance these programs except in narrowly defined, zero-interest circumstances.

As the program is implemented, coordination between the GWDB and MHEC will be important to ensure that information requests to participating institutions are aligned, efficient, and non-duplicative.



SB 6 (HB 106)

State Personnel – Collective Bargaining – Nontenure Track Faculty

USM Position: Opposed

Status: Passed

SB 6 represents a significant statutory expansion of collective bargaining rights within Maryland’s public higher education system. Effective July 1, 2026, the bill makes nontenure-track faculty eligible to organize and collectively bargain at University System of Maryland (USM) institutions, Morgan State University, and St. Mary’s College of Maryland. The law applies broadly to full-time, part-time, and adjunct faculty whose primary assignments involve academic instruction, and it requires that bargaining units be established at the institutional level should eligible employees choose representation. While the bill contains exclusions – including faculty whose positions are fully funded by grants, contracts, or clinical revenues, those employed at the University of Maryland, Global Campus, and those working outside the state – it nonetheless introduces a new labor-relations framework into campus environments long governed through faculty Shared Governance.

The USM remains committed to compliance with state law. As implementation approaches, the USM will continue to engage constructively with campus leadership, faculty, and State partners to navigate these unknowns responsibly, uphold academic mission and governance, and ensure that the bill’s effects – many of which will only become clear over time – do not inadvertently undermine institutional flexibility, fiscal stewardship, or educational quality.

SB 84 (HB 141)

State Personnel – Collective Bargaining – Graduate Assistants

USM Position: Opposed

Status: Passed

SB 84/HB 141 extends collective bargaining rights under state law to graduate assistants employed at the University of Maryland, College Park and the University of Maryland, Baltimore County. As enacted, the bill classifies eligible graduate assistants at those two institutions as state employees solely for collective bargaining purposes and places labor relations under the jurisdiction of the Public Employee Relations

Board. The legislation does not apply system-wide to all USM institutions. The law has a delayed effective date and will take effect on July 1, 2028.

SB 212 (HB 3)

Higher Education - Student Financial Assistance - Dependents of State or Local Public Safety Employees (Maryland Fallen Heroes Tuition Benefits Act)

USM Position: Monitor

Status: Passed

SB 212/ HB 3 exempts the spouses and financially dependent children of State or local public safety employees who die as a result of, or in the course of, performance of their duties from paying out-of-state or out-of-county tuition at a State public institution of higher education.

The bill also modifies the allocation method for the Edward T. and Mary A. Conroy Memorial Scholarship and the Jean B. Cryor Memorial Scholarship by requiring MHEC to establish a formula, as specified, to distribute funds to higher education institutions subject to the availability of funds provided in the State budget. The method must also prioritize awards for current scholarship recipients before awarding funds to new applicants.

SB 28 (HB 604)

Arbitration Reform for State Employees Act of 2026

USM Position: Opposed

Status: Passed

SB 28/HB 604, as originally introduced, proposed a constitutional amendment requiring the Governor to include in the state budget the funding necessary to implement all terms of collective bargaining agreements or arbitration awards covering state employees, including those at state institutions of higher education and the Maryland Environmental Service, subject to voter approval in November 2026. Contingent on that approval, the bill also revises state statutory collective bargaining law for most state employees by expanding arbitration and negotiation requirements, while expressly excluding employees of state institutions of higher education (including the USM) from those statutory changes at this time.

SB 318 (HB 1125)

State Capital Program – Covered Projects – Public Engagement and Community Outreach Requirements

USM Position: Letter of Information

Status: Did Not Pass

SB 318/ HB 1125 would have established new statewide requirements for community engagement and outreach for state capital projects. HB 1125 would have required units of state government proposing “covered projects” – including construction, installation, or substantial alteration of physical infrastructure with potential impacts on noise, visibility, environmental conditions, or community character – to prepare a community engagement plan, conduct specified outreach within a one-mile radius, and submit a project-specific report to the Department of Budget and Management (DBM).

USM institutions already operate under a comprehensive Board of Regents policy governing community notification and engagement during the planning of campus capital projects. Under USM Board of Regents policy ([VIII-10.40 Policy on Community Notification of Capital Projects](#)) each institution must make reasonable efforts to notify adjoining property owners or occupants – as well as local governments within one mile –when planning a new structure or a substantial exterior modification on USM-owned land. The policy emphasizes that campus facilities must be developed not only to meet the needs of students, faculty, and staff but also to reflect the interests of neighboring communities and municipalities. It further underscores that broad participation is essential, and that institutions are encouraged to build substantive relationships with community and governmental partners throughout the master planning process.

USM was successful in having the sponsors accept an amendment to exclude USM in the bill based on our Board policy during their deliberations.

SB 739 (HB 1219)

Climate Change, Homeowner’s Insurance, and Emergency Management – Study

USM Position: Support with Amendment

Status: Passed

SB 739/HB 1219 directs the University System of Maryland to conduct a comprehensive study examining how climate change is affecting homeowner’s insurance markets and shaping the state’s emergency and disaster preparedness needs. In addition, the bill requires the evaluation of federal and private flood insurance programs, an assessment of emerging risks facing Maryland communities, and recommend actions to improve insurer responsiveness and resilience. The bill also requires USM to report its findings and recommendations to the General Assembly by July 1, 2027. To support this work, the bill authorizes the use of up to \$100,000 from the Strategic Energy Investment Fund.

SB 671 (HB 1336)

Procurement Contracts and Construction Contracts – Payments

USM Position: Letter of Information

Status: Did Not Pass

SB 671/ HB 1336 proposed to extend Maryland’s existing prompt payment requirements to local government owners and revise the timelines, notifications, and interest provisions that govern payments to contractors and subcontractors. The bill would have required payment within 30 days of receiving a proper invoice – 15 days for Small Business Reserve contracts – and mandated that if any portion of a payment is withheld, the procuring entity must provide written notice within a set timeframe explaining the reasons for the withholding. It also sought to establish an interest rate of 2% per month on unpaid amounts and authorizes contractors to suspend work if payment has not been made after proper notice.

This bill presented several practical concerns regarding how its structure may unintentionally impose operational strain on public entities – especially the institutions that comprise the USM. In addition, the bill could have had an impact on complex non-construction projects such as large IT implementations that can include milestone payments and result in a dispute over the quality of work that was completed (or not) as the case may be.

The USM worked with the proponents of the bill to ensure that we were not included in the portion of the statute that this bill was focused on.

IT, CYBERSECURITY, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

[SB 597](#)

Higher Education – Maryland Artificial Intelligence Partnership

USM Position: Support

Status: Passed

SB 597 establishes the Maryland Artificial Intelligence (AI) Partnership within the University System of Maryland (USM) to develop a statewide AI strategic plan and coordinate related initiatives. It also requires the partnership, in collaboration with the Maryland Department of Labor, to create Maryland Technology Extension Hubs, and establishes an AI Incubation Lab within USM to help state agencies accelerate the responsible adoption of AI in coordination with the Maryland Department of Information Technology (DoIT).

SB 597 establishes a broad framework to position Maryland as a leader in artificial intelligence by anchoring statewide initiatives within the USM, expanding existing cybersecurity workforce programs to include AI, and creating new structures to support responsible AI adoption in state government. Additional amendments clarified roles, refined institutional responsibilities, and narrowed or conditioned certain new program elements to ensure operational feasibility and appropriate oversight.

The bill also renames the Cybersecurity Public Service Scholarship to be the Emerging Technology Public Service Scholarship.

[SB 763 \(HB 1596\)](#)

Maryland Technology Development Corporation - Maryland Growth Initiative - Established

USM Position: Support

Status: Passed

SB 763/HB 1596 establishes the Maryland Growth Initiative within the Maryland Technology Development Corporation (TEDCO) to support Maryland start-up companies as they move from early development into scaling. The bill also creates a dedicated

Maryland Growth Initiative Fund, administered by TEDCO, and requires the Governor to include \$5 million annually to capitalize it.

USM institutions are deeply embedded in Maryland's innovation and commercialization ecosystem, including early-stage venture creation, technology transfer, and the growth of companies that choose to remain in the state because of USM-linked resources. These connections align directly with the bill's objective: helping Maryland-based firms scale without relocating.

The [USM Office of Research and Economic Development](#) exists explicitly to promote technology commercialization, entrepreneurship, and partnerships that drive Maryland's economic development. It supports founders and private-sector partners through programs such as the USM Launch Fund and the Maryland Momentum Fund, a system-wide investment vehicle for early-stage USM-affiliated companies. These programs help new companies grow within Maryland's borders. [UM Ventures](#), the joint technology commercialization effort of University of Maryland, Baltimore (UMB) and the University of Maryland, College Park (UMCP), actively invests in and supports Maryland-based startups through programs such as:

- The [Baltimore Fund](#), which provides financial incentives for companies affiliated with Maryland public higher education institutions to locate in Baltimore City, directly supporting retention of university-affiliated companies.
- [The Maryland Momentum Fund](#), staffed by UM Ventures, which provides early-stage capital for USM-affiliated companies – capital that directly parallels the funding category created in SB 763 (post-seed/Series A).
- Trajectory Next Accelerator and multiple translational research and commercialization programs designed to move technologies from labs to Maryland markets.

SB 905

Maryland Technology Development Corporation - Maryland Advanced Manufacturing Grant Program - Established

USM Position: Support

Status: Passed

SB 905 establishes a dedicated grant program within the Maryland Technology Development Corporation (TEDCO) to support the growth of Maryland-based companies engaged in regenerative medicine and other forms of advanced manufacturing. The bill creates a capital fund that provides financial assistance for facility upgrades, infrastructure improvements, and specialized equipment, helping early-stage and scaling businesses expand their production capabilities and remain competitive within the state.

Across the USM, research enterprises and industry partners are working at the forefront of regenerative medicine, advanced biomanufacturing, clean-energy technologies, and next-generation materials. Yet many growing companies find themselves constrained not by a lack of ideas, but by the capital-intensive demands of scaling those ideas into production. SB 905 directly addresses this gap by establishing a dedicated, strategic grant fund housed at TEDCO to help homegrown firms modernize facilities, acquire spe-

cialized equipment, and expand the manufacturing capacity necessary for long-term competitiveness.

Advanced manufacturing has a well-documented multiplier effect, creating broad economic benefit far beyond the initial investment. Maryland already has competitive strength in critical areas including the life sciences, regenerative medicine, and other emerging technologies that require precise, sophisticated production environments.

The USM is deeply engaged in this transformation. Institutions are not only educating the next generation of engineers, scientists, and technologists, but are also serving as active engines for high-tech product development and commercial manufacturing through programs including, but not limited to the [University of Maryland, College Park \(UMCP\) and HighT-Tech, Maryland Industrial Partnerships \(MIPS\)](#), and the [Maryland Manufacturing Partnerships \(MMP\)](#).

These examples underscore how deeply integrated USM institutions are in Maryland's manufacturing ecosystem – and how often companies depend on university expertise, specialized equipment, and skilled graduates to scale new technologies. SB 905 reinforces this pipeline by supporting companies at their most vulnerable and capital-intensive moment: the transition from research and prototyping to full-scale production.



SB 388 (HB 898)

Economic Development – Delivering Economic Competitiveness and Advancing Development Efforts (DECADE) Act

USM Position: Monitor

Status: Passed

SB 388/HB 898 is an economic-development and business-growth measure intended to modernize and better align Maryland’s property-tax incentive programs. The bill refines how Enterprise Zone and RISE Zone credits are applied and coordinated, clarifying eligibility, timing, and interaction so that state and local incentives function more predictably and effectively in catalyzing private investment, job creation, and place-based redevelopment.

SB 388 does not change the taxes paid by University of Maryland institutions –

USM campuses are generally property-tax exempt – but it has a meaningful effect on the private development projects that increasingly advance university missions. University of Maryland, Baltimore (UMB) and University of Maryland, College Park (UMCP) rely on ground leases, public-private partnerships, research parks, and mixed-use districts where the private partner pays property tax and project feasibility depends on predictable, timely property-tax credits. By clarifying how Enterprise Zone and RISE Zone credits interact, this bill directly affects the certainty, financing, and timing of university-adjacent development that supports research, workforce growth, and community revitalization.

For the UMB, the impact is immediate and practical. UMB is a primary intended beneficiary of the RISE Zone statute, and the BioPark and surrounding West

Baltimore innovation area exist because these incentives offset market risk in a challenging submarket. SB 388 expressly confirms that Enterprise Zone and RISE Zone credits may be used concurrently, subject to a 100 percent cap – removing ambiguity that had made lenders and investors cautious on projects located in overlapping zones. Just as important, the bill allows the RISE credit to apply in the year a property first becomes qualified, improving early-year cash flow, debt-service coverage, and willingness to start construction. While the required recalculation of the RISE credit after applying the Enterprise Zone credit slightly reduces theoretical total credit value in stacked scenarios, the trade-off favors certainty and earlier eligibility – less paper value, but more projects that actually move forward.

At UMCP, the effects are more strategic but still significant. UMCP relies less on RISE Zones than UMB, but Enterprise Zone incentives are central to Discovery District–type projects, North Campus research expansion, and office and innovation partnerships with private firms. The bill’s expanded eligibility window for enhanced Enterprise Zone credits retroactively captures a narrow slice of projects and, more importantly, signals legislative support for office-plus-retail mixed-use formats that universities increasingly need to create walkable, amenity-rich environments that attract talent and industry partners. The bill carries little downside risk for UMCP, while reinforcing development models already embedded in long-term campus planning.

In short, this measure does not alter university tax liability, but it materially improves the certainty and financing of the private development that allows UMB, UMCP, and the USM to deliver research, jobs, and community impact at scale.





CAPITAL BUDGET "SCORECARD" -- THE PROGRESS

INST'N	PROJECTS	FY2027 AMOUNTS (STATE FUNDING)		
		BOARD REQ JUNE 2025	GOVERNOR'S CIP JAN 2026	DLS MEMORANDUM
UMB	Central Electric Substation and Redundancy	1,523 C	715 C	
UMB	New School of Social Work Building	44,552 PCE	46,747 PCE	
UMB	SOD Ambulatory Surgery Center	862 CE	862 CE	
UMB	Inst for Health Computing, N Bethesda			
UMCP	Interdisciplinary Engineering Building (Zupnik Hall): New	13,110 CE	13,110 CE	
UMCP	Campuswide Building System and Infrastr Improvements	12,500 C	0	
UMCP	Health and Human Sci Complex	44,315 C	44,315 C	
UMCP	Graduate Student Housing Subsidy	5,000 AC		
UMCP	Xfinity Center Roof Repair			
BSU	Thurgood Marshall Library and Academic Commons	6,830 P	4,802 P	
BSU	Pedestrian and Vehicular Infrastructure Improvements			
BSU	Boiler and Chiller Upgrades			
BSU	Safety and Security Upgrades			
BSU	MARC Station Redevelopment Infrastructure Improvmnts			
TU	Smith Hall Renovation & Reconstruction	35,973 CE	35,973 CE	
TU	Electrical Sub-Station	2,804 P	12,820 P	
TU	Central Plant Restoration (supplemental request)		10,600 PCE	
UMES	Nuttle Hall (FY2026 Appropriation)			
UMES	Repurposing Campus Flood Mitigation Funds for Critical Campus Switchgear Replacement			
UMES	New School of Veterinary Medicine			
FSU	Challenger Center (FY2022 Appropriation)			
FSU	Baseball Complex Infrastructure and Artificial Turf			
CSU	New Residence Hall		2,000 C	
UBalt	101 W. Mt Royal Ave Acquisition			
SU	Blackwell Hall Renovation	361 C	1,124 C	
UMGC	Adelphi Building Renovation			
UMBC	Sherman Hall Renovation	9,087 C	9,087 C	
UMBC	New Student Svcs Bldg (swap with Sondheim in CIP)	6,000 P	0	
USMO	Colwell Center Deferred Maintenance (\$1M ARB each FY27,	3,906 C	3,906 C	
USMO	USG Biomedical Sciences and Engineering Ed Building			
USMO	Capital Facilities Renewal (all Academic Revenue Bonds)	24,000 PCE	24,000 PCE	2
		210,823	210,061	2

A=Acquisition; P=Planning; C=Construction; E=Equipment

OF SB283 THROUGH THE 2026 SESSION (rev 4/3/26)

FUNDS: GO BONDS, PAYGO, SEIF; AND USM ARBS)				
RECOM-NDATIONS	SENATE	HOUSE	FINAL	COMMENTS
715 C	715 C	715 C	715 C	Preauthorized \$12.376 for FY28
46,747 PCE	46,747 PCE	46,747 PCE	46,747 PCE	Incl \$3.015M SEIF (operating paygo).
862 CE	862 CE	862 CE	862 CE	
13,110 CE	13,110 CE	13,110 CE	13,110 CE	DLS recommends deauthorizing \$3M appropriated for FY2025 and pre-authorizing \$3M for FY2028 pending a Part 1 program. Senate Rejected.
0	0	0	0	
44,315 C	44,315 C	44,315 C	44,315 C	Includes \$15M ARB. DLS asked UMCP to comment on how they'll manage the \$7.5 million difference between UMCP's requested total and the figure in the CIP. Preauthorized \$47.92M for FY28.
		5,000 APCE	5,000 APCE	Added by the House (\$3M to \$5M floor amdt)
	5,000 PCE	10,000 PCE	10,000 PCE	Added by the Senate. House <u>doubled</u> it.
4,802 P	4,802 P	4,802 P	4,802 P	
				DLS recommends deauthorizing \$150,000 from FY20 related to the MARC station developmt. The funds are no longer needed. Approved.
		1,000 PCE	1,000 PCE	Added by the House.
		500 PCE	500 PCE	Added by the House.
		2,000 PCE	2,000 PCE	Added by the House (floor amendment)
35,973 CE	35,973 CE	35,973 CE	35,973 CE	Includes \$14M SEIF (operating paygo).
12,820 P	12,820 P	12,820 P	12,820 P	Includes \$10M ARB.
10,600 PCE	10,600 PCE	10,600 PCE	10,600 PCE	
				DLS recommends expanding available use of these funds to include demolition of the existing building. UMES Requested this. Approved.
				DLS recommends repurposing \$3.1M from FY2024 for this purpose. DLS asked UMES to comment. Approved.
	500 PCE	1,000 PCE	1,000 PCE	Added by Senate. House doubled it.
				DLS recom deauthorization of \$3M appropriation due to cancellation of project. Approved.
		100 PCE	100 PCE	Added by Senate (Floor amendment)
2,000 C	2,000 C	2,000 C	2,000 C	
	500 A	500 A	500 A	Added by Senate with language preauthorizing the balance of the sale price (\$7.1M) for FY28. House concurred.
1,124 C	1,124 C	1,124 C	1,124 C	
	500 PCE	1,000 PCE	1,000 PCE	Added by Senate. House doubled it.
9,087 C	9,087 C	9,087 C	9,087 C	DLS recom includes an amendment to the fiscal 2023 authorization for this project to allow funds from that year's authorization to be used for construction, in addition to design. Approved.
0	0	0	0	
3,906 C	3,906 C	3,906 C	3,906 C	Includes \$1M in ARB. Pre-auth \$4.82M in FY28.
				Added language extending use of FY19 funding through June 1, 2028.
24,000 PCE	24,000 PCE	24,000 PCE	24,000 PCE	All \$24M in ARB. (DLS Comments only)
10,061	216,561	231,161	231,161	Link to 2026 ARB Bill SB 769 Link to FY27 Capital Budget Bill SB283

UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF MARYLAND



Susan Lawrence
Vice Chancellor for Government Relations
Cell: 301-848-9150
slawrence@usmd.edu

Andy Clark
Assistant Vice Chancellor for Government Relations
Cell: 301-741-3972
aclark@usmd.edu



Karen Shaheed, Esq.
Executive Vice President, General Counsel and Chief of Staff
Office: 301-860-3503
Cell: 301-575-7073
kshaheed@bowiestate.edu

Michael Harrison
Director of Government and Community Relations
Cell: 301-892-0580
mlharrison@bowiestate.edu



Stephanie K. Hall
Chief Government and Legislative Affairs Officer
Office: 410-951-6545
Cell: 443-813-0501
sthall@coppin.edu



Darlene Smith, PhD
Interim President
dbsmith@frostburg.edu



Eli Modlin
Chief of Staff and Vice President for Public Affairs
Cell: 443-614-8913
ejmodlin@salisbury.edu

Kate Bleile
Public Affairs Coordinator
Phone: 410-548-1241
Email: kxbleile@salisbury.edu



Katie Maloney
Associate Vice President for Government Relations and Public Policy
Office: 410-704-4034
Cell: 410-409-0978
kmaloney@towson.edu



Suzanne Tabor
Executive Director of Government Relations
Office: 410-837-5036
Cell: 410-917-2624
stabor@ubalt.edu

—STATE RELATIONS COUNCIL 2026



Kevin Kelly
*Chief Government Affairs and
Vice President*
Office: 410-269-5087
Cell: 202-657-2128
kkelly@umaryland.edu

Jeanette Ortiz, Esq.
Director of Government Affairs
Office: 410-269-5087
Cell: 410-703-5352
jeanette.ortiz@umaryland.edu



Paul Monteiro
*Vice President of Government Relations
and Community Affairs*
Cell: 443-832-7185
dmonteil@umbc.edu



David A. Nemazie
*Chief of Staff and Executive Director
of Government Affairs*
Office: 410-221-2006
Cell: 443-496-0187
nemazie@umces.edu



Jazz Lewis
Director of State Government Relations
Cell: 240-688-1843
jmlewis@umd.edu

Molly McKee-Seabrook
Associate Director of Government Relations
Cell: 301-204-2073
mckee@umd.edu



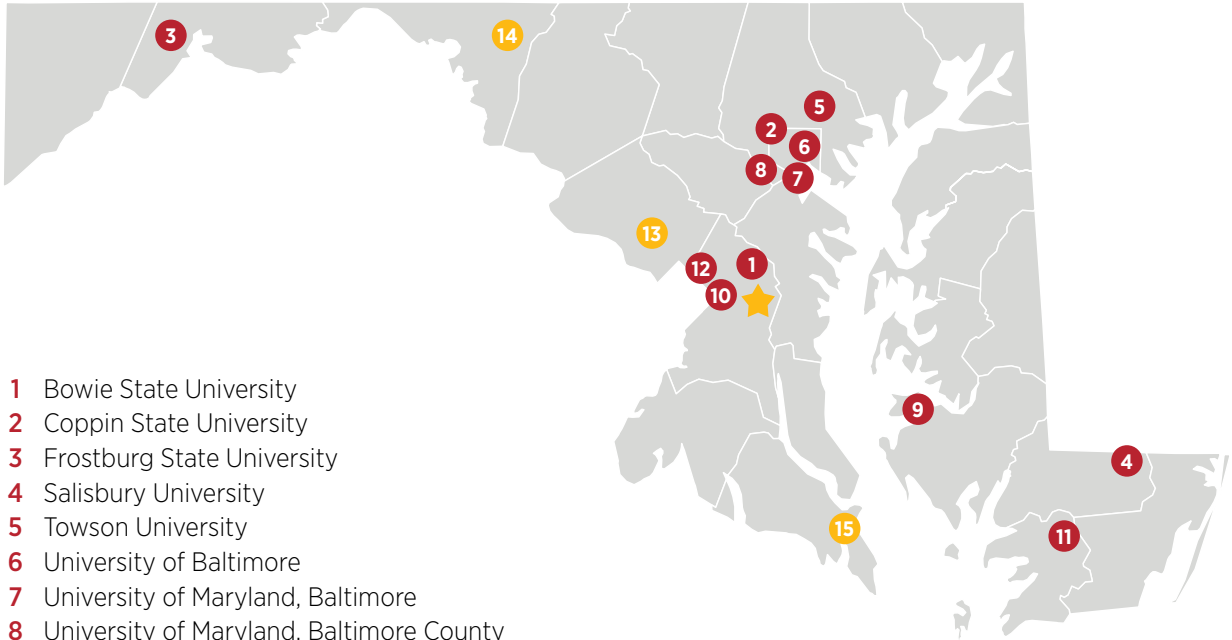
UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND
EASTERN SHORE

Jim Mathias
Director Government Relations
Office: 410-651-7789
Cell: 443-497-0911
jmathias@umes.edu



Frank Principe
*SVP & Chief Government Affairs
and External Relations*
Cell: 443-463-4844
frank.principe@umgc.edu

Erin Favazza
*Director of State Government
Relations*
Cell: 443-623-2014
erin.favazza@umgc.edu



- 1 Bowie State University
- 2 Coppin State University
- 3 Frostburg State University
- 4 Salisbury University
- 5 Towson University
- 6 University of Baltimore
- 7 University of Maryland, Baltimore
- 8 University of Maryland, Baltimore County
- 9 University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science
- 10 University of Maryland, College Park
- 11 University of Maryland Eastern Shore
- 12 University of Maryland Global Campus

Regional Higher Education Centers

- 13 Universities at Shady Grove
- 14 University System of Maryland at Hagerstown
- 15 University System of Maryland at Southern Maryland

★ University System of Maryland Office