



HB0001 Historically Black Colleges and Universities - Funding

Presented to the Honorable Maggie McIntosh and Members of the Appropriations Committee
January 19, 2021 1:30 p.m.

POSITION: SUPPORT

NARAL Pro-Choice Maryland urges the Appropriations Committee to issue **a favorable report on HB0001 Historically Black Colleges and Universities – Funding**, sponsored by the Speaker of the House.

Our organization is an advocate for reproductive health, rights, and justice. The ability to access quality, affordable higher education is directly and indirectly connected to reproductive freedom in many ways. Data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics found that college graduates have a median weekly income that is 40% higher than those with just a high school diploma.¹ Economic security allows individuals to determine if, when, and how they plan—and support—their families. Of course, this doesn't consider the debt that so many individuals have to take on in order to go to college, which is why we are grateful that some of the funding outlined in HB0001 could be dedicated towards financial aid.

Data from the National Postsecondary Student Aid Study found that [22% of all undergraduate students are parents](#), and Black women are more likely than women from other backgrounds to be raising children while in college.² We are hopeful that some of the funding dedicated towards “academic support,” as stated in the bill language, would entail support services for pregnant, expectant, and parenting students, faculty, and staff, including on-site child care centers. Coppin State University, for example, [had to close its child development center](#) due to significant structural repairs, which likely disrupted the daily life of many Coppin student-parents, perhaps significantly and permanently changing their education plans. Re-opening this center—and opening childcare centers at the state's other HBCUs—would be a wise investment for HBCU administrators.

For too long, Maryland's HBCUs—and HBCUs across the country—have been underfunded due to the way systemic racism has impacted, and continues to impact, the socio-economic well-being and security of Black people in this county. We applaud this bill and its commitment to educational equity. For these reasons, NARAL Pro-Choice Maryland **urges a favorable committee report on HB0001**. Thank you for your time and consideration.

¹ Learn more, earn more: Education leads to higher wages, lower unemployment, Career Outlook, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, May 2020.

² Institute for Women's Policy Research (IWPR). 2018. Institute for Women's Policy Research (IWPR) analysis of data from the U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2015–16 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS:16).