

## Support HB 948 – Increase Access to Maryland’s Part-Time Grant Program Help Low-Skilled Marylanders Access & Succeed in College

### OVERVIEW

- Over 1.3 million working-age Marylanders lack a college degree.
- More education could help many of these workers move into high-demand, better-paying jobs but major barriers stand in the way. Many cannot find enough financial assistance in order to pay for it.
- Half of Maryland college students are over the age of 25, and nearly half of all students are enrolled part-time.
- More than half of community college students nationwide work more than 20 hours per week.
- State policies often overlook these non-traditional students, and are biased toward students transitioning directly from high school to full-time college enrollment.

### THE CHALLENGE

- The Part-Time Grant program is Maryland's primary need-based program for non-traditional students.
- With awards of up to \$2,000 per academic year, it can help close the gap for working adults, but students must be taking between six and eleven credits in order to apply. **Those enrolled less than half time are ineligible.**

### THE SOLUTION

Expand eligibility for the part-time grant program to students attending less than half time.

- The definition of part-time should be expanded to include students taking between three and eleven credits. This minor change will ensure that more students have a chance at receiving financial aid.
- Such a fix is especially worthwhile during these economic times when many are pressed to enhance their skills and make themselves more valuable in the market.

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