



Financial Education & Capability Commission
July 27, 2020
Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Sen. Kathy Klausmeier (Co-Chair), Del. Dana Stein (Co-Chair), Robin McKinney (CASH Campaign), Meg Woodside (Woodside Foundation), Allen Cox (MD Coalition for Financial Literacy), Erin Layton and Megan Schutz (Maryland 529, Treasurer's Office), Lisa Norrington-Mouseley (MSEA), Franklin McNeil, (PNC), Ken Venick (Equity Mortgage Lending), Bruce Lubich, (MD Association of CPA's), Michelle Waxman Johnson (for Jan Wagner, Central Scholarship), Jennifer Griffin (for Marquita Friday, MSDE), Stuart Campbell (DHCD), Tony Salazar (DOL, Financial Regulation Division)

Interested Parties: Dr. Tisa Canady-Silver, John Fiastro, Michael Walsh, Sean McEvoy (DOL, Financial Regulation Division), PJ Hogan, Nicholas Blendy, Sandy Comenetz, Sandra Dodson, Francine Hyman (MCRC)

Staff: Sue Rogan (CASH Campaign), Lonia Muckle (CASH Campaign)

Welcome & Introductions:

Senator Klausmeier and Delegate Stein welcomed the group. Sue Rogan facilitated introductions and a technology overview.

2020 Recommendations Overview:

The commission discussed legislation that was related to the 2019 recommendations.

- Recommendation 1 - Elder Financial Abuse Unit: ([SB407](#)) The Senior and Vulnerable Adult Asset Recovery Unit would operate in the Office of the Attorney General (OAG). The bill was vetoed due to the fiscal note. The Governor vetoed many bills that had a fiscal note in light of the current COVID-19 pandemic.
- Recommendation 2 - Universal Licensing check cashing entities: ([HB1196](#) / [SB939](#)) This bill repeals the exemption of licensure for businesses that cash checks as incidental. Businesses can choose full licensure, or they can register with the Office of the Commissioner of Financial Regulation (CFR). It was heavily negotiated to ensure that all stakeholders interest was considered. The bill was enacted, and it protects consumers while giving businesses flexibility. Check cashers must register with CFR, charge no more than 1.5% as a fee, and must prominently display their fee structure and how consumers can file a complaint with CFR. Those who want to charge higher fees must become fully licensed by CFR.
- Recommendation 3 - Maryland 529 State Match Contribution: ([SB615](#)) Limits the state match contribution to two accounts per eligible beneficiary. This bill was not passed; however, clarification was given in the state budget to limit the state match to one account per eligible beneficiary. This is a temporary solution.

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- Recommendation 4 - Maryland 529 State Match Contribution Qualified Expenses: This recommendation was for clarifying that the State Contribution Program match funds can be used for only eligible postsecondary expenses. There was not a specific bill for this recommendation.

In regard to the third and fourth recommendation, the General Assembly received a briefing from the Department of Legislative Services (DLS) on higher education as part of the budget. They flagged issues of one beneficiary receiving multiple state matches.

Update on Maryland 529:

- Erin Layton, Executive Director
 - Erin provided the Commission with an update about the state match contribution. The clarification provided in the state budget does not go into effect until the 2021 cycle. This means that families who have exploited this loophole in past cycles will be able to exploit it again for the 2020 cycle.
 - Maryland 529 with the help of T. Rowe gathered data about how states that conduct a state match contribution administer the program. There were four main restrictions that were found amongst the states. Some states have age restrictions, while Maryland does not. All states have some sort of income criteria. All states have residency restrictions, either on the beneficiary, account holder or both. Certain states have relationship restrictions, while Maryland does not.
 - The 2020 application is closed, and Maryland 529 has received over 30,000 applications. The state match contribution program has an appropriation of just over \$10 million. However, if all of the current applications are funded, the amount needed to fulfill the request will be almost \$14.5 million.
 - Erin provided different scenarios on how much the state match contribution program would cost if different policies were enacted for the 2020 application. These are not recommendations by Maryland 529. The scenarios are for the Commission to consider.
 - Two accounts per one beneficiary would bring the cost just above the current appropriation of \$10 million.
 - Limiting the account holder to a lifetime maximum of \$10,000 of state match money would bring the cost to \$13.4 million.
 - Limiting the beneficiary age to 26 would bring the cost to \$13 million.
 - Limiting the beneficiary to eight state match contributions for a lifetime would bring the cost to \$11.4 million.
 - Two contributions per beneficiary and having a max of \$10,000 for an account holder would bring the cost to just below the appropriation.
 - The Commission is considering following-up next meeting about possible 529 recommendations. The Commission also has expressed interest to have representatives from the Senate Budget and Tax Committee and DLS to provide additional insight.



- Maryland 529 through analysis found that there is minimal use of funds for K-12 expenses. However, data is not collected specially on the intended use of funds, so additional data is needed. Account holders are not required to provide intention of use of money.
- Maryland 529 produces an [annual report](#) that gives data on enrollment and usage of their different plans, including by race, income, and county.

Financial Security During COVID-19:

- Delegate Stein, Co- Chair and Representative of District 11
 - The House Environment and Transportation Committee is concerned about the increase of housing insecurity. Due to job loss from the pandemic, renters are facing an increased rate of eviction. One of the main recommendations from the committee is that the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) increases the amount directly allocated for rental assistance.
- Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD)
 - In addition to the \$30 million Governor Hogan announced for eviction prevention assistance, DHCD has received \$14 million from the Emergency Solution Grant (ESG) administered through the U.S Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Also, DHCD received \$13 million from the Community Service Block Grant (CSBG) administered through the U.S Department of Health and Human Service (HHS). Both of these grants were awarded through the Coronavirus Aid Relief and Economic Security Act (CARES). The grant money is able to be used for renter's assistance. DHCD has already used funds to alleviate concerns in shelters.
 - Governor Hogan allocated \$50 million to the [Maryland Nonprofit Recovery Initiative \(NORI\)](#). DHCD along with the Department of Commerce is administering grants to nonprofits that are engaged with vulnerable populations. The deadline to apply is August 4.
- Commissioner of Financial Regulation (CFR)
 - CFR is working with the lending industry to ensure that proper protocol is being followed. Their work covers areas like student loans, mortgages, and consumer loans. CFR is working with agencies to ensure that they are adhering to forbearance rules.
 - CFR is also working to address potential issues that can arise when forbearance ends. These issues include making sure that people do not get overwhelmed with payments that are due when forbearance ends. They are working with other states to find a solution, so lenders are not claiming money at the same time.
 - CFR has a [Financial Relief Guide for Marylanders](#) and holds stakeholder meetings. The guide is updated regularly.
- Office of Attorney General (OAG) Taskforce (reported by member Robin McKinney)
 - The OAG created an [Access to Justice Taskforce](#). There are 10 committees that specialize in a particular area of concern. Main concerns that this taskforce is



addressing includes consumer protection, housing, food security, safety, security, and ensuring Marylanders are connected.

- One particular area covered by the Consumer Protection Committee is the debt collection process. The Committee is concerned with ensuring that appropriate information about the debt collection process is reaching the population. The Spanish speaking population is having a difficult time accessing information. The OAG has a Spanish speaking person on staff 5 days a week to help alleviate the problem.
- The Committee is looking into multiple ways to deliver information and help individuals navigate resources.
- Central Scholarship
 - Central Scholarship recognizes that there is a problem of access to technology like the internet and computers since many colleges are moving to online classes. They are monitoring emergency funds to provide aid to students, and they are looking for trends and changes.
- Meg Woodside and Tisa Silver Canady, SPIN project
 - Recently briefed Chancellor Perman and his staff about the role of higher education institutions in promoting financial security.
 - There is interest in having a symposium of higher education professionals that are focused on financial education. Due to COVID-19, interest has shifted to have a small working group in the fall.
 - Tisa has been researching nation-wide to evaluate best practices of financial education in higher education institutions. Specifically, she is looking at Texas, Indiana, and Delaware. These programs will help her develop an outline for funding, partnerships, and resources of material for students.
- CASH Campaign of Maryland
 - CASH has moved all in person financial education classes to online webinars.
 - They have a webpage dedicated to [COVID-19 resources](#).
 - CASH received funding through the National Disability Institute to ensure that their websites and webinars are accessible.
 - They are also working with the Department of Human Services (DHS) and the Casey Foundation to convert in person financial education content provided to youth in foster care to be delivered virtually.
 - CASH is also launching outreach materials in six languages to ensure that Marylanders that qualify for the Economic Impact Payment (EIP) are applying to receive it.

Discuss Topics for 2020

- There is interest in continuing discussions on the Maryland 529/state contribution plan and receiving an update on the Community College Promise Scholarship.
- There are extreme concerns about the levels of financial stress students are facing during this time.

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- The Commission voted to focus on higher education and re-entry issues for the following meetings.

Business:

- Appointments updates
 - There is a vacancy for a Credit Union Representative.
 - The Commission is looking for a representative from a Non-profit organization that has a focus in financial education.

Meeting dates for 2020:

- September 2nd: 10:00 AM to 11:30 AM (Virtual Meeting)
- October 7th: 10:00 AM to 11:30 AM (Virtual Meeting)
- November 5th: 10:00 AM to 11:30 AM (Virtual Meeting)

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Financial Education & Capability Commission
September 2, 2020
Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Del. Dana Stein (*Co-Chair*), Meg Woodside (*Woodside Foundation*), Allen Cox (*MD Coalition for Financial Literacy*), Erin Layton and Megan Schutz (*Maryland 529, Treasurer's Office*), Lisa Norrington-Mouseley (*MSEA*), Franklin McNeil (*PNC*), Ken Venick (*Equity Mortgage Lending*), Bruce Lubich (*MD Association of CPAs*), Michelle Waxman Johnson (*for Jan Wagner, Central Scholarship*), Jennifer Griffin (*for Marquita Friday, MSDE*), Stuard Campbell (*DHCD*), Tony Salazar (*DOL, Financial Regulation Division*)

Interested Parties: Dr. Tisa Canady-Silver, John Fiastro, Michael Walsh, Sean McEvoy (*DOL, Financial Regulation Division*), PJ Hogan, Nicholas Blendy, Sandy Comenetz, Sandra Dodson, Francine Hyman (*MCRC*), Dariya Brown (*Speaker, MCRC*), Robyn Dorsey (*Speaker, MCRC*)

Staff: Sue Rogan, Lonia Muckle (*CASH Campaign*)

Welcome & Introductions:

Delegate Stein welcomed the group. Sue Rogan facilitated introductions and a technology overview.

Review Minutes

The minutes were approved.

Maryland 529 Meeting Update

On September 11th, commission leadership will meet with delegates, senators, DLS staff, and Maryland 529 staff. This meeting will bring together important players to discuss unintended consequences of the Save4College state match program.

Higher Education Student Borrowers (Dariya Brown, MCRC)

- Student loan issues in times of COVID
 - Early, in March, student borrowers that held a federal student loan received temporary relief due to the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act. This relief was granted through suspended student loan payments, stopping debt collection on defaulted loans, nonpayment still counting towards loan payment plans, and interest rates were set to 0% for 60 days. Relief through the CARES Act has been extended through the end of the year. There were issues with the implementation of these changes. Borrowers were experiencing negative hits on their credit scores, listing accounts as defaulted, some borrowers had their wages garnished, and numerous other issues.
 - The reliefs given through the CARES Act only apply to federal student loans. This means that reliefs are not guaranteed for Perkins student loans or private student loans.
 - Doesn't include debt cancellation, which means that this is a short-term solution.



- Federal congressional action will be needed to extend these reliefs past December 31st.
- Current Student issues in the times of COVID
 - Current students are receiving a lot of information about how their schools and programs are handling the pandemic. Students are becoming anxious about potential changes and they have concerns over their safety.
 - Students are also concerned about their current and future financial situation. The pandemic has changed their financial situation along with their families'. Some are considering taking on more student loan debt to be able to stay in college.
 - Students are advocating for reduced tuition and fees since their college experience has changed. They also have concerns over their job prospects.
 - Students using off-campus apartments that signed their lease in February are having troubles with breaking their lease.
 - The Offices of the Attorney General and the Commissioner of Financial Regulation have been in contact with a student loan provider because they were reporting loans improperly. That servicer did fix the issue within days of being contacted by the offices. If students or borrowers are having problems with their student loan provider, the [Student Loan Ombudsman](#) is located with the Commissioner's Office. The Ombudsman Office will try to intervene to help settle the issue.

Source of Income Discrimination (Robyn Dorsey, MCRC)

- Fair Housing Action Center of Maryland
 - This program focuses on fair housing and tenant advocacy. The Fair Housing program focuses on education, outreach, and training related to discrimination in housing. The Tenant Advocacy helps tenants navigate their housing issues.
- Implementation of the Source of Income Housing Law
 - Housing discrimination is defined by the Fair Housing as “when you try to limit where someone lives or the type of housing they are in, based on who they are”. These categories are defined by
 - if you are discriminating against them
 - if they are a member of a protected class.
 - The federal Fair Housing Act includes race, color, sex, nation of origin, religion, familial status, and disability.
 - Each level of government can add additional members. Maryland has added marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, and source of income.
 - The Home Act, which passed into legislation this year, makes source of income a protected class starting on October 1.
 - Source of income can include things like employment, government assistance, and assets.
 - Even if the housing provider is exempt, they cannot advertise using exclusive language.



Survey of Post-secondary Institutions (SPIN) Update (Tisa Silver Canady)

- SPIN put out a report that included six recommendations:
 - Embrace a more comprehensive approach to financial education
 - Identify a campus "champion" to lead financial education efforts, but employ a collaborative approach
 - Consider implementing a mandatory financial education component
 - Establish a statewide network of postsecondary financial education professionals
 - Invest in professional development/career paths for financial education staff
 - Document and disseminate the most robust student financial education programs in Maryland.
- Phase 2 of the project focuses on:
 - Establish a statewide network of postsecondary financial education professionals
 - Document and disseminate the most robust student financial education programs in Maryland.
 - COVID-19 has affected higher education institutions. There have been funds dedicated to schools and students from the federal government. These extra funds have put additional strain on financial aid administrators.
 - SPIN is researching out of state institutions like Texas, Indiana, and Maine.

Business

- Recommendations
 - Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) needs to acquire better technology for the processing of financial aid applications.
- Potential Recommendations
 - There was discussion around bringing back last year's recommendation of: Create and fund an Elder Financial Abuse Unit within Maryland's Office of the Attorney General. Commission members wanted to review the fiscal note for [SB 407: Office of the Attorney General - Senior and Vulnerable Adult Asset Recovery Unit](#) before voting.
 - State support for SPIN.

Meeting dates for 2020:

- October 7th: 10:00 am to 11:30 (Virtual Meeting)
 am
- November 5th: 10:00 am to 11:30 (Virtual Meeting)
 am

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Financial Education & Capability Commission
October 7, 2020
Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Sen. Kathy Klausmeier (*Co-Chair*), Del. Dana Stein (*Co-Chair*), Robin McKinney (*CASH Campaign*), Meg Woodside (*Woodside Foundation*), Allen Cox (*MD Coalition for Financial Literacy*), Megan Schutz (*Maryland 529, Treasurer's Office*), Lisa Norrington-Moseley (*MSEA*), Franklin McNeil (*PNC*), Ken Venick (*Equity Mortgage Lending*), Bruce Lubich (*MD Association of CPA's*), Michelle Waxman Johnson and Jan Wagner (*Central Scholarship*), Jennifer Griffin and Marquita Friday (*MSDE*), Stuard Campbell (*DHCD*), Tony Salazar (*DOL, Financial Regulation Division*), Lynne Durbin (*MSRP*), William Gruhn (*OAG*)

Interested Parties: Dr. Tisa Canady-Silver, John Fiastro, Michael Walsh, Sean McEvoy (*DOL, Financial Regulation Division*), PJ Hogan, Nicholas Blendy, Sandy Comenetz, Sandra Dodson, Hannah Gaskill (*Maryland Matters*), Danielle Cox (*Speaker, Correctional Education*), Christopher Dews (*Speaker, Jobs Opportunity Task Force*), Francesca Jean Baptiste (*Speaker, CASH Campaign of Maryland*)

Staff: Sue Rogan, Lonia Muckle, Christine Galarza, Tonaeya Moore (*CASH Campaign*)

Welcome & Introductions:

Senator Klausmeier welcomed the group. Sue Rogan facilitated introductions.

Review Minutes

The minutes were approved.

Maryland 529 Meeting Update

There have been two meetings with general assembly members and Maryland 529 staff to discuss problems with the state match program. There have also been meetings with national leaders and other states who administer a match or scholarship program that is connected to their 529 plans. Meetings have been focused on eliminating the small number of people that are taking advantage of the program and getting excessive state funds and ways to ensure that the program is supporting post secondary expenses. There will be an update in the November meeting.

Updates on Returning Citizens and COVID-19

- **Danielle Cox**, Department of Labor, Correctional Education
 - The Correctional Education program seeks to provide incarcerated individuals with high quality services that facilitate successful transition into Maryland's workforce and communities.
 - They have a "pipeline of services" available to incarcerated individuals to help them gain employment and. Students start with completing their high school



- graduation requirements, and then they can move on to a specific workforce program.
- MD Labor's Reentry Navigators help the students remove barriers to employment.
 - [EARN Maryland](#) is a workforce development grant program that helps businesses cultivate the skilled workforce they need to compete. Vehicles For Change (VFC) is a EARN grantee, and they have trained interns since 2015.
 - Currently, students are required to complete 120 calendar days. The Department of Labor (DOL) submitted **Correctional Institutions - Correctional Education Council - Mandatory Education Program Requirements (SB 70)** in the 2020 legislative session. This bill changes the mandatory instructional days from 120 days to 240 days. They have reintroduced a similar bill for the 2021 legislative session.
 - There are 24 occupational training programs that are available to students. There are also national certificate programs available as well. There are significantly less training programs available for women. Correctional Education is expanding more opportunities for women in the future.
 - Correctional Education offers transitional programs. These are available to people that are within 24 months of release, completed an occupational program, and placed by a case manager. There are four courses that have a financial literacy module.
 - All classes stopped on March 13, 2020 due to COVID-19. Classes started to come back in late August. Packets were given to students in the interim, but this was not equal to in class work.
 - Barriers for reentering the workforce:
 - Many people arrive home with few/none of these crucial resources: phone, computer, internet connectivity, and computer skills. This makes online hiring events, remote interviewing, job search and application, resume management, and applying for benefits quite difficult.
 - Transportation has been a major barrier (ex: getting to an apprenticeship, going to an interview, getting to meetings on time).
 - Obtaining vital documents has been slow due to the pandemic.
 - AJCs are offering virtual services, but some customers would benefit from in-person access which has been temporarily suspended to limit COVID risks.
 - Interviews and job training are online, but government issued phones do not have the capability to do them.
 - Returning citizens with children are limited to jobs with shifts in the evenings or nights in order to oversee virtual learning.
 - Many family members who would normally provide financial support are currently unemployed or have little to no finances to support returning citizens due to the pandemic.



Criminal Justice System-Fines and Fees

- **Christopher Dews**, Policy Advocate, Jobs & Opportunity Task Force (JOTF)
 - Definitions:
 - Fines: court mandated penalties that are paid back to the court
 - Fees: direct charges for services
 - Restitution: payment to the harmed party
 - Fees are the most unexpected cost, and they usually become a burden to black and indigent people.
 - In 2018, JOTF published [The Criminalization of Poverty: How to Break the Cycle Through Policy Reform in Maryland](#). This report goes deeper into the connection between the criminal justice system and poverty.
 - Criminal justice debt is not treated as regular debt. This places it outside of the debt protection laws. This affects the process of expungement. Criminal charges cannot be expunged if criminal justice debt is owed. Criminal justice debt and also be transferred to civil debt. This increases the barriers to employment by showing up on credit history.
 - Fines and fees can be brutal and lock people into poverty. When people do not have the money to pay the fines and fees, it can drive people to take desperate action to avoid the retaliation for not paying. Consequences for not being able to pay the associated fines and fees can range from more fees to reincarceration.
 - There are a number of fines and fees that specifically affect Marylanders. There are pre-conviction costs, and these apply before a person is convicted of a crime. Sentencing and incarceration costs are acquired during time served. There are also costs associated with probation, parole, and any other supervision or additional requirements after release.
 - JOTF recommendations
 - Eliminate Criminal Justice Fees & Existing Interest/Late Fees
 - Ensure Ability to Pay Before Imposing Fines
 - [Biloxi, Mississippi](#) has a [financial hardship](#) standard for fines and fees.
 - Fines and fees can be transitioned into community service or job training programs
 - Eliminate the Cash Bail System
 - [Pre-trial service system \(DC\)](#)
 - Study the Impact of Current Fines and Fees

Stimulus Payment Updates and Latest Scams

- **Francesca Jean Baptiste**, CASH Campaign of Maryland, Director of Tax Partnerships
 - This information is based on the most recent update as of 10 AM October 7, 2020.



- Economic Impact Payments (EIP) also known as stimulus payments are provided through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES).
- Most people have received their payment, because the stimulus is processed using 2018 or 2019 tax information or the non-filer tool.
- Non-filers have until November 21, 2020 to apply for their stimulus payment. This does not apply for people who filed an extension or need to file taxes. Their deadline is October 15, 2020.
- EIP and Incarcerated Persons
 - Originally, the IRS stated that incarcerated people are not eligible for the EIP payment.
 - On September 24, 2020, the court ruled against the IRS siding with the plaintiffs which represents people incarcerated from March 27, 2020 to present.
 - The IRS has not fully updated their website. Also, many other actions can happen that will make incarcerated people not eligible.
 - CASH is in contact with the Department of Corrections to evaluate what supports they need. There will be an update in the November meeting.
- Scams
 - There are many scams that are specifically themed round the EIP.
 - The IRS will never call or text. They will most likely communicate through the mail.
 - The Comptroller has posted about phishing scams.
 - Be on the lookout for fake charities. Research charities online before making a contribution.
 - Scammers are also sending fake letters through the mail. The IRS has sent out Notice 1444-A, but scammers are using fake letters to request money or encourage people to call.

Survey of Postsecondary Institutions (SPIN) Updates

- **Tisa Silver-Canady**, Survey of Postsecondary Institutions (SPIN)
 - We did not have enough time in this meeting to hear from SPIN. Their presentation will be included in the newsletter.
- Phase 2 Priority Recommendations:
 1. Establish a statewide network of postsecondary financial education professionals
 2. Document and disseminate the most robust student financial education programs in the state
 3. Considerations
 - The network could bring more structure to reporting on financial education programs and related outcomes.
 - It is important to search for alignment and outcomes (including those that may be reported elsewhere already).



Meeting dates of 2020:

November 5th: 10:00 AM - 11:30 AM (Virtually Meeting)



Financial Education & Capability Commission
November 5, 2020
Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Sen. Kathy Klausmeier (*Co-Chair*), Del. Dana Stein (*Co-Chair*), Robin McKinney (*CASH Campaign*), Meg Woodside (*Woodside Foundation*), Allen Cox (*MD Coalition for Financial Literacy*), Erin Layton (*Maryland 529, Treasurer's Office*), Lisa Norrington-Moseley (*MSEA*), Franklin McNeil (*PNC*), Ken Venick (*Equity Mortgage Lending*), Bruce Lubich (*MD Association of CPA's*), Michelle Waxman Johnson and Jan Wagner (*Central Scholarship*), Donna Thomas, Jennifer Griffin, and Marquita Friday (*MSDE*), Stuard Campbell (*DHCD*), Tony Salazar (*DOL, Financial Regulation Division*), Lynne Durbin (*MSRP*), William Gruhn (*OAG*)
Interested Parties: Dr. Tisa Canady-Silver, John Fiastro, Michael Walsh, Sean McEvoy (*DOL, Financial Regulation Division*), PJ Hogan, Nicholas Blendy, Sandy Comenetz, Sandra Dodson
Staff: Sue Rogan, Lonia Muckle, Christine Galarza, Tonaeya Moore (*CASH Campaign*)

Welcome & Introductions:

Senator Klausmeier welcomed the group. Sue Rogan facilitated introductions.

Review Minutes

The minutes were approved.

Current Recommendation

- "The Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) needs to acquire better technology for processing financial aid applications."
 - MHEC has a system called Maryland College Aid Processing System (MDCAPS). According to MHEC, this system is a comprehensive financial aid system that allows MHEC to process State scholarship applications and allocate funds more efficiently using today's technology. Students make an application through the [MDCAPS website](#).
 - The commission decided to table this recommendation until next year due to the new information provided.

Potential Recommendation

- "Create and fund an Elder Financial Abuse Unit within Maryland's Office of the Attorney General."
 - This was recommended by the Commission last year in the 2019 report. It was vetoed by Governor Hogan due to its \$250,000 fiscal note.
 - The fiscal note is needed to appropriately support the work of investigating and tracking reports of elder financial abuse.
 - The majority of the Commission voted yes for this recommendation with representatives from the Secretary of Housing and Community Development and Commissioner of Financial Regulation abstaining.

Maryland 529



- “Support legislation that curbs abuses within the Save4College program through changes to residency requirements, income calculations, age limits, and a lifetime max on state contributions. The Commission encourages the state to provide regulatory authority to Maryland 529 to make changes within the spirit of the legislative intent of the program to help low and middle income families to access post-secondary education.”
 - This recommendation is the product of a work group composed of state legislatures and staff from DLS and Maryland 529. The recommendations are to help address the few individuals who are abusing the program. Figure 1 and 2 attached at the end of the minutes explain the problem in more depth.
 - The majority of members voted “yes”, with the representative from Maryland 529 abstaining.

SPIN Recommendation

- “The Financial Education & Capability Commission endorses and supports the SPIN project, which seeks to create a comprehensive approach in providing financial education programs to post-secondary students.”
 - This recommendation is an endorsement of the SPIN project and its goals and initiatives. The Commission has consistently heard updates from SPIN in the past, and it will continue to support SPIN initiatives by having an active role in progressing SPIN’s goals.
 - The majority of members voted “yes” for this recommendation.

Priority Recommendations from Poll

- The top three priorities commission members choose to focus on where: (1) Create a taskforce to research the impact of current fines and fees in the criminal justice system, (2) Eliminate expungement fees for indigent populations, and (3) Eliminate public defender application fees for indigent populations.
- The commission moved to recommend “ Create a taskforce to research the impact of current fines and fees in the criminal justice system” and encompass the other two priorities as research points of the task force. Another point of research for the task force is researching the effect of multiple fines across counties.
- The majority of members voted “yes” for this recommendation.

Figure 1:

This is an example of how a family with one child, one set of parents/guardians, and two sets of grandparents can abuse the program *without any policy change*.

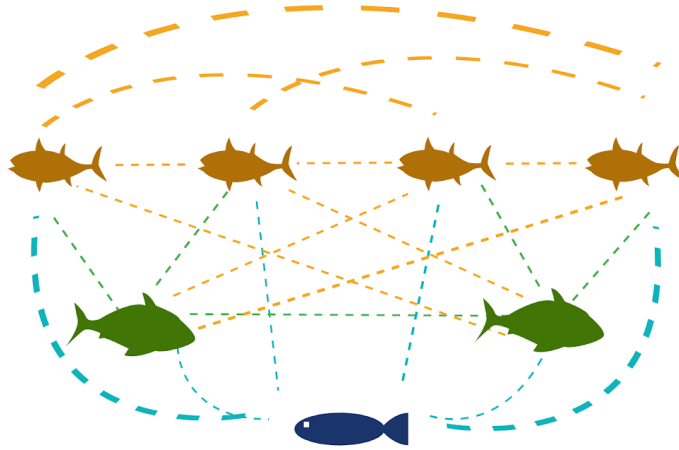


Figure 2:

This is an example of how a family with one child, one set of parents/guardians, and two sets of grandparents can abuse the program with the *clarification in the budget*.

