



## **Senate Bill 377**

### *Higher Education – Teacher Development and Retention Program – Definition*

MACo Position: **SUPPORT**

To: Appropriations Committee

Date: March 26, 2024

From: Brianna January

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **SUPPORTS** SB 377. By expanding eligible institutions for the Teacher Development and Retention Program to include community colleges, SB 377 will help strengthen Maryland’s pipeline of public school teachers and will provide critical support to community college students pursuing a career in education. As partners in K-12 education and supporters of community colleges, counties have a strong interest in both.

The Teacher Development and Retention Program is a pilot program designed to incentivize a cohort of students to pursue a career in the teaching profession. The Program is one facet of Maryland’s multifaceted effort to develop a sustainable pipeline of educators and school professionals as school systems nationwide continue to struggle with hiring and retention. The Program provides financial support to eligible individuals interested in pursuing a career in the teaching profession, beginning by offering eligible individuals a one-time stipend for participation in an experiential learning opportunity in a classroom and concluding by placing those individuals in high-need schools, grade levels, or content areas.

Under current law, college students are eligible for the Program and financial aid if they attend an institution of higher education in the state where at least 40 percent of the attendees receive federal Pell Grants.

SB 377 would expand eligibility to also include community college students. In doing so, the bill would open up the Program – and the teaching profession – for more Maryland students and would encourage more community college students to consider a career in education. Accordingly, MACo urges the Committee to issue a **FAVORABLE** report on SB 377.