



Letter of Information

House Appropriations and Health and Government Operations Committees *HB 552 (Taveras) – Higher Education – Drug Detection Products – Distribution and Report*

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On behalf of the member institutions of the Maryland Independent College and University Association (MICUA) and the nearly 55,000 students we serve, I thank you for the opportunity to provide a letter of information [*HB 552 \(Taveras\) – Higher Education – Drug Detection Products – Distribution and Report*](#). The legislation would require that "each institution of higher education shall provide, at no charge to students, drug detection products to be made available in student health centers, libraries, and bathrooms".

While the bill is well-intentioned, MICUA institutions' concern about the legislation, include but not limited to:

- Contradictory messaging by college campuses to condone drug use;
- The liability over the accuracy of the drug detection products;
- The funding challenges for training and purchasing a drug detection kit for so many locations on campus, given there are numerous bathrooms;
- Extending the availability of drug detection products beyond the residence halls and satellite campuses would overburden the budget; and
- Placing drug detection products in multiple locations would create a challenge to quantify their distribution; thus, there is a potential for inaccurate reporting.

MICUA appreciates the sponsor's intent and focus on this important issue; however, given current budget constraints and severely limited campus personnel resources, we cannot support new policies or regulations that would impose additional financial burdens on our institutions. Between fiscal years 2024 and 2025, the Sellinger program received a 48% reduction in funding. These reductions have had negative repercussions at all the MICUA institutions. Due to changes in the funding formula, the reduction was not spread equitably across all our institutions. Some institutions suffered much more significant reductions, resulting in a loss of enrollment and a reduction in services provided. The legislation is commendable but would impose additional costs for MICUA institutions that simply cannot be absorbed at this time. MICUA institutions partner with their local health departments for naloxone and will also work with them to receive drug detection kits for distribution on campuses. But the conditions and directives in HB 552 are simply too onerous for MICUA to support.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this information on behalf of our institutions regarding House Bill 552. If you have any questions, please contact Irnande Altema, Associate Vice President for Government and Business Affairs, ialtema@micua.org.