



Letter of Support

Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
SB 709 (Carozza)
Education – Purple Star Schools Program and Purple Star Colleges

Matt Power, President
mpower@micua.org
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On behalf of Maryland's independent colleges and universities and the more than 56,000 students we serve, thank you for the opportunity to provide a letter of support regarding **[SB 709 \(Carozza\) Education – Purple Star Schools Program and Purple Star Colleges](#)**.

The bill establishes the Purple Star Program to identify institutions of higher education that offer strong support and service for military-connected students.

The Maryland College Collaboration for Student Veterans Commission was established in 2016 (Ch. 413 of 2016), and MICUA is a designated representative on the Commission. Several MICUA institutions have deep connections to military bases located in proximity, and they have demonstrated a strong commitment to providing a supportive school environment for all students, including veterans and their families. The Commission's work consists of "ensuring the educational success of returning veterans, including their recruitment, successful transition into higher education, retention, and eventual graduation."

SB 709 would help to provide additional resources for service members and their families that attend designated Purple Star Colleges. We appreciate that this would be a voluntary program for an institution to opt into if they choose to further enhance and support a student veteran.

If you have any questions or would like additional information, please contact Irnande Altema, Vice President for Government and Business Affairs, ialtema@micua.org.

For these reasons, MICUA urges a favorable Committee report for Senate Bill 709.