

**Department of Legislative Services**  
Maryland General Assembly  
2013 Session

**FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE**

House Bill 7  
Appropriations

(Delegate Bohanan)

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**Southern Maryland Higher Education Council - Modifications**

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This bill adds a member of the public with an extensive knowledge of higher education in Maryland to the Southern Maryland Higher Education Council. The Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) is required to staff the council. The date by which the council must present a final report with a long-term strategy for improving access to higher education in Southern Maryland is extended by one year, to December 1, 2013. Accordingly, the termination date for the council is extended by one year to June 30, 2014.

The bill takes effect June 1, 2013.

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**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** MHEC can staff the task force with existing budgeted resources. Revenues are not affected.

**Local Effect:** Local government officials appointed to the council can participate without affecting local budgets.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

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**Analysis**

**Current Law:** Chapter 622 of 2011 (HB 1347) established the Southern Maryland Higher Education Council to develop a strategy for improving access to higher education for the residents of Southern Maryland. The council consists of 12 specified members. An interim report with a short-term strategy was due by December 1, 2011, and a final

report with a long-term strategy was due by December 1, 2012. The council is scheduled to terminate on June 30, 2013.

**Background:** In January 2013 the acting chair of the council submitted a letter to the Governor and the leadership of the General Assembly requesting a one-year extension of the council, with a final report due on December 1, 2013, due to the ongoing nature of the council's work.

The council held its first meeting on February 27, 2012, and met a total of six times during 2012. The council reports that it is well underway in completing its task in developing a strategy for improving higher education access for Southern Maryland residents. With the assistance of the University System of Maryland, the council is undertaking an extensive higher education needs assessment survey of Southern Maryland residents and businesses over the coming months, which will allow it to develop a long-term strategy for improving access to higher education in the region.

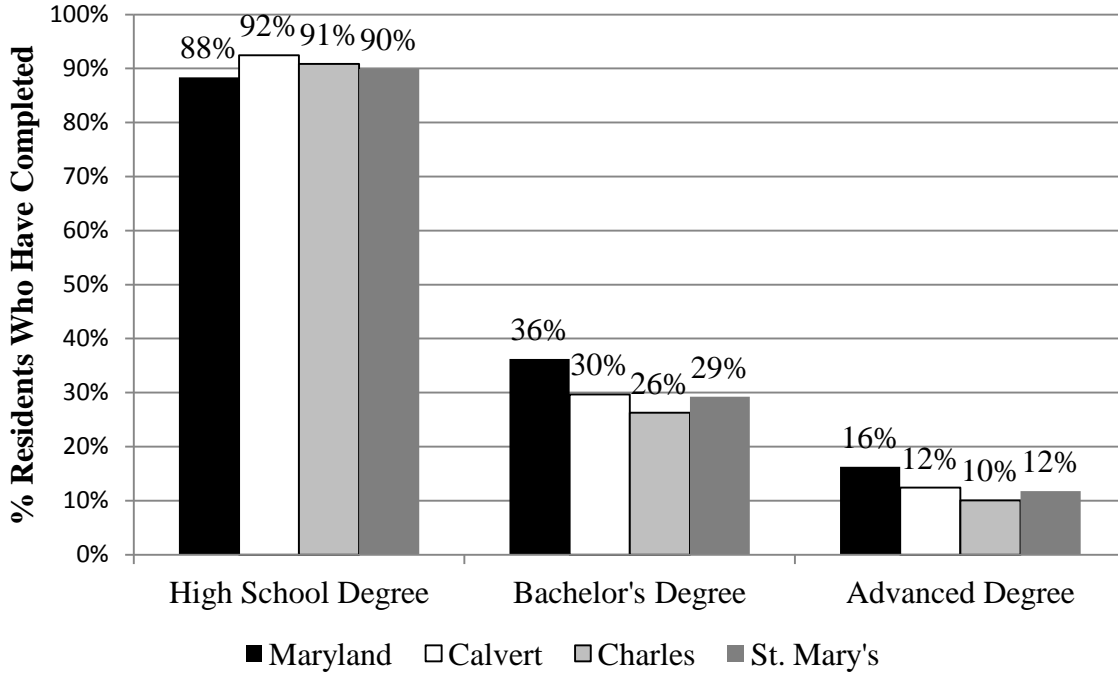
In addition to the extension of the termination date, the council requested two additional changes to Chapter 622. First, for an additional member be appointed to the council by the Governor who has extensive knowledge of higher education in Maryland. This change will allow the current acting chair to officially serve as the chair of the council. Second, it requested that MHEC be named as the council's official staffing agency. There is no State agency named to staff the council, and staff support is needed to complete the work of the council. Up to this point, The Patuxent Partnership (TPP) has been providing unofficial administrative support for council members to receive reimbursement for travel to attend meetings, and the Department of Legislative Services has been providing some staff support. TPP is a nonprofit member organization that works with government, industry, and academia to advance education through science, technology, engineering, and math-based initiatives; to advance technology through speaker programs and networking; to advance science and technology transfer through the exchange of ideas, information, and data related to technologies; and to foster workforce development through an array of initiatives.

The Southern Maryland region is generally thought of as including Calvert, Charles, and St. Mary's counties. Located within this area are a public four-year institution of higher education (St. Mary's College of Maryland), a community college (College of Southern Maryland), and two regional higher education centers (the Southern Maryland Higher Education Center and Waldorf Higher Education Center).

The educational attainment of residents of Calvert, Charles, and St. Mary's counties is compared with the educational attainment of all Maryland residents in **Exhibit 1**. The exhibit shows that, relative to the statewide figures, slightly higher percentages of Southern Maryland residents have completed high school but lower percentages hold college degrees.

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**Exhibit 1**  
**Educational Attainment of Residents Age 25 and Older**  
**2009-2011**



Source: *U.S. Census Bureau, 2009-2011 American Community Survey*

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**Additional Information**

**Prior Introductions:** None.

**Cross File:** None.

**Information Source(s):** Maryland Higher Education Commission, U.S. Census Bureau, Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - January 25, 2013  
 ncs/rhh

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