

R029-0405

10 **RESOLUTION CONCERNING THE MARYLAND GENERAL**
20 **ASSEMBLY SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM**

30 **WHEREAS:** The Maryland General Assembly is unique among state legislatures in allowing
40 delegates and senators power to grant scholarships to students in their district
50 with very few restrictions; and,

60 **WHEREAS:** Such power has led to abuse of the system by many legislators, who have been
70 free to give out scholarships to their campaign workers, family and friends—
80 examples of nepotism and favoritism on a state level; and,

90 **WHEREAS:** Oversight of the \$11.3 million allotted each year for the scholarships will ensure
100 that, if money needs to be spent, it is at least being used responsibly; and,

110 **WHEREAS:** Several Maryland senators and delegates regularly give the money allotted them
120 for scholarships back to the state to distribute as it wishes, demonstrating the
130 inconsistencies present in the program; and,

140 **WHEREAS:** Governor Ehrlich supports reform of the scholarship program, and has proposed
150 moving the money to a state commission to ensure scholarships are granted on
160 more objective criteria, while still leaving legislators with some say; and,

170 **WHEREAS:** A 1992 study by Common Cause/Maryland found that 1,200 of about 7,000
180 scholarships went to students with no demonstrated financial need; and,

190 **WHEREAS:** College tuition in the state of Maryland has seen increases in the last few years,
200 financial aid money is not as abundant around the state as in past years and it is
210 up to Maryland students to speak out about misuse of government funding.

220 **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:** That the Maryland Student Legislature supports the strong
230 stance taken by the Governor and other lawmakers who have fearlessly
240 championed bills to reform and even end the program; and,

250 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:** That the Maryland Student Legislature supports massive
260 restructuring and even abolishment of the program, in favor of a new legislative
270 program which would do such things as ensure money went to students in the
280 appropriate district, and generally provide for the Higher Education
290 Commission's greater role in the legislative scholarship process; Protecting the
300 rights of individual legislators to distribute some scholarships in the way they
310 wish, and not forcing such scholarships to be need-based; and,

320 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:** That the Maryland Student Legislature recognizes that the
330 issue will most likely not be dealt with in the 2005 legislative session, owing to
340 the unfavorable status granted one such bill and the fact that two other bills have
350 been stalled in committee since early February; and,

360 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:** That, despite this, the Maryland Student Legislature hopes to
370 see more bills dealing with reform and abolishment of the current General
380 Assembly scholarship program appear in the next session, and that such bills
390 are actually given a chance to make it to the floor.

400 **MANDATES:** Governor Robert L. Ehrlich, Jr.
410 Comptroller William Donald Schaefer
420 Speaker of the House of Delegates, Michael E. Busch
430 President of the Senate, Thomas V. Mike Miller, Jr.
440 Senate Minority Leader J. Lowell Stoltzfus
450 House Minority Leader George C. Edwards
460 House Minority Whip Anthony J. O'Donnell
470 State Senator Sandra B. Schrader
480 State Senator Paula C. Hollinger
490 Delegate John G. Trueschler

SPONSOR:

Holly Brownley, Co-DCP, St. Mary's College of Maryland

COSPONSORS:

Caitrin McCarron, Co-DCP, St. Mary's College of Maryland

Craig Reynolds, Anne Arundel Community College

Matt Penick, University of Maryland, Baltimore County

Rose Capozzi, University of Maryland, Baltimore County