A Resolution Exploring the Designation of the University of Maryland as a Sanctuary Campus

WHEREAS the Residence Hall Association (RHA) is the governing body for all on-campus students at the University of Maryland, and

WHEREAS the on-campus community is diverse in areas of race, religion, ethnicity, nationality, citizenship, socioeconomic status, gender, sexual preference, and ability, and

WHEREAS the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) federal program has provided a pathway for some in the undocumented community to receive exemption from deportation and the opportunity to pursue higher education in the United States since its introduction in 2012, and

WHEREAS the Maryland Dream Act also supports the undocumented community at the University of Maryland by opening in-state tuition rates and state financial aid to qualifying undocumented immigrant students, and

WHEREAS President Wallace Loh has voiced support for both DACA and the Maryland Dream Act as they provide “educational opportunities to academically qualified persons of all backgrounds and walks of life,” and has enrolled students under both programs, and

WHEREAS The Diamondback has reported an increase in student concern regarding the protection of the rights of the estimated 113 DACA students on campus, and

WHEREAS a Sanctuary City is an entity in which “instructional or state government employees do not need to notify the federal government of the presence of [undocumented immigrants] living in or passing through their communities,” and

WHEREAS a Sanctuary Campus is a designation modeled after “Sanctuary City” for a college or university that adopts policies to protect students who are undocumented immigrants, and

WHEREAS 28 higher education institutions from across the nation have officially designated themselves as Sanctuary Campuses, and
WHEREAS numerous Big 10 student organizations have also advocated for designating their respective institutions as Sanctuary Campuses, including the University of Michigan, viii the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, ix and Indiana University at Bloomington, x and

WHEREAS Prince George's County has already established itself as a Sanctuary County in 2003, xi and

WHEREAS RHA has committed to support diversity and inclusion on campus in both classroom and residence hall settings,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that RHA affirms its commitment to diversity and inclusion, ensuring a safe environment for all on-campus students, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that RHA will continue to search for and pursue the most effective means for honoring its commitment, including consideration of designating the University of Maryland as a Sanctuary Campus, and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that RHA, through its Senate committees and hall/area councils, will continue to engage its members and the larger University of Maryland community in dialogue surrounding diversity and inclusion issues.

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1 https://www.uscis.gov/humanitarian/consideration-deferred-action-childhood-arrivals-daca
3 President Loh’s email from Monday, November 21
4 http://terp.umd.edu/living-the-dream-act/#.WDfTH_orl2w
5 http://www.ojjpac.org/sanctuary.asp
7 http://remezcla.com/lists/culture/sanctuary-campus-daca/
ix https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSez18q-k326vRu3VXiE19tOC6odn65YZeXbLgOgrGa9cbjvKg/viewform?c=0&w=1
x http://fox59.com/2016/11/16/students-plan-walkouts-wednesday-to-demand-sanctuary-campuses/
xi https://www.aclu.org/other/prince-georges-county-md