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Howard County, MD Council

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Honorable council members,

I am here today to advocate for additional funding for the Howard County Community College Diagnostic Sonography program. To inform council members, that program admits qualified students on a lottery basis due to limited clinical spots, at least according to an internet search. The cohort size is 16 – 24 students per year, again according to the internet. The internet also reported that applications have been as high as 400 per year. I would like to take a minute to ask the HCC representatives here whether those numbers are close to reality.

My daughter has tried for two consecutive years to get into this program, but with numbers like that you won't be surprised to learn that she was not selected last year or this year. Sadly, she is done with Howard County and will be pursuing admission elsewhere. When I looked up these admission and application numbers for HCC sonography yesterday, I became a mad dad, and decided I had to speak up today. I can't say for sure, but I suspect there are hundreds of other mad dads out there. So for all the mad dads out there, I am asking the council members: were you aware of this? If not, why not? If so, why does this situation persist?

I don't know what it would cost to quadruple or quintuple the admissions rate, but if we are spending \$143 million for a library, we ought to be willing to spend double that on education for our younger citizens, wouldn't you agree? I'm willing to wager that a substantially smaller sum than \$143 million would fix the problem for a couple of decades.

You are probably familiar with the line from the movie Field of Dreams: "If you build it, they will come." These students have been coming, repeatedly, and we have built nothing. It is too late for my daughter, but not for others. This is what we expect from you, as public servants of the citizens of Howard County: Pay attention; serve the citizens. Please fix this problem at HCC.