

ANDY HARRIS, M.D.

FIRST DISTRICT, MARYLAND

COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

SUBCOMMITTEES

AGRICULTURE, RURAL DEVELOPMENT,  
FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION

HOMELAND SECURITY

LABOR, HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES,  
EDUCATION



Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

Washington, DC 20515

November 29, 2016

1533 LONGWORTH HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20515  
PHONE 202.225.5311

15 CHURCHVILLE ROAD, SUITE 102B  
BEL AIR, MARYLAND 21014  
PHONE 410.588.5670

212 WEST MAIN STREET, SUITE 204B  
SALISBURY, MARYLAND 21801  
PHONE 443.944.8624

100 OLDE POINT VILLAGE, SUITE 101  
CHESTER, MARYLAND 21619  
PHONE 410.643.5425

WWW.HARRIS.HOUSE.GOV

Mr. Kevin Kamenetz  
Baltimore County Executive  
400 Washington Ave, Mailstop 2M01A  
Old Courthouse Mezzanine  
Towson, MD 21204

Dear County Executive Kamenetz:

In your recent letter to the leadership of higher education institutions in Baltimore County, you wrote of your strong support for "efforts to protect undocumented students from deportation in the wake of the recent presidential election." You also wrote that you have directed local law enforcement to "not participate in any effort to identify...students...that would subject them to deportation by federal authorities." I write to express concern with, and disapproval of, your apparent advice to and instruction of local education and law enforcement officials to defy federal immigration law.

As a lawyer, sworn to uphold the Constitution, you should be familiar with Article VI, Clause 2, otherwise known as the Supremacy Clause. It states that the Constitution, and federal laws made pursuant to it, constitutes the supreme law of the land and that in cases of conflict, federal law must be applied. This is particularly true in the context of immigration, over which the federal government exercises exclusive jurisdiction. In short, I am concerned that your letter demonstrates a lack of understanding that federal immigration law is the supreme law of the land, and that defiance of it represents a potential dereliction of duty for a sworn elected official or law enforcement officer.

As a steward of the Baltimore County budget, you are surely aware of efforts in Congress (that I fully support) to withhold all federal funding from "sanctuary" jurisdictions. Tens of millions of dollars in federal funds flow to Baltimore County, and tens of millions of federal dollars and loan subsidies also flow to the benefit of those educational institutions to which you wrote.

As consideration of both FY17 and FY18 federal appropriations bills loom, I hope that you re-consider your position. Otherwise, I fear that your lack of respect for federal law may result in budgetary consequences under which hard-working Baltimore County taxpayers would suffer. Yours is a risky gambit.

The American people have just spoken loudly and strongly, and they have said that they want federal immigration law enforced.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Andy Harris".

Congressman Andy Harris, M.D.  
Maryland's First District

Cc:

Chancellor Robert L. Caret  
University System of Maryland  
701 E. Pratt Street  
Baltimore, MD 21202

Dr. Sandra Kurtinitis  
Community College of Baltimore County  
7201 Rossville Boulevard  
Baltimore, MD 21237

President Jose Antonio Brown  
Goucher College  
1021 Dulaney Valley Road  
Baltimore, MD 21204

President Kevin J. Manning, Ph.D.  
Stevenson University  
1525 Greenspring Valley Road  
Stevenson, MD 21153

President Kim Schatzel  
Towson University  
8000 York Road, Room 331  
Towson, MD 21252

President Freeman A. Hrabowski  
University of Maryland, Baltimore County  
1000 Hilltop Circle  
Baltimore, MD 21250