



***Maryland's Voice for  
Nonpublic Education***

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**MARYLAND SENATE  
JUDICIAL PROCEEDINGS COMMITTEE**

**FEBRUARY 20, 2020**

**SENATE BILL 993**

**COUNTY BOARDS AND PUBLIC AND NONPUBLIC  
PREKINDERGARTEN PROGRAMS AND SCHOOLS  
DISCRIMINATION – PROHIBITION**

**OPPOSE**

Maryland CAPE is our state's chapter and one of 40 state chapters of the Council for American Private Education. Our network includes the Catholic, Christian, Evangelical Lutheran, Friends, Independent, Jewish, Lutheran, Montessori, Muslim, and Seventh Day Adventist school communities. We speak on behalf of roughly 120,000 nonpublic school students attending over one thousand nonpublic schools across our great state of Maryland.

In representing the interests of the nonpublic schools, Maryland CAPE has endless appreciation for the state programs that have benefited our schools and the families who have chosen these schools for their children's education. The state funded programs that are accessed by the nonpublic school community range from the purchase of school textbooks and curriculum to the purchase and installation of vital security components that ensures the safety of our students in a very dangerous world. Other funds have gone to update and maintain the aging facilities of nonpublic schools. Over the last few years thousands of low-income children from across the state – especially in the most financially depressed areas – have been given the opportunity to choose a nonpublic school for the first time using the BOOST scholarship that they received.

If Senate Bill 993 were to pass, all of these benefits will virtually come to an end. The nonpublic school community is mostly made up of faith-based schools which are guided by policies and provisions that are hundreds and even thousands of years old. They are not items that were put into place by the administration of a specific school, but deeply held beliefs that have always been protected by the Constitution. Despite that, working with legislators and MSDE, we have gone to great lengths to make sure that NO DISCRIMINATION is taking place in our schools. Even if there is merely an inference or suggestion that anything that resembles that is taking place, swift measures are enforced.

Please report unfavorably on Senate Bill 993.