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Bill: HB 1157
Title: Education - Maryland High School Diploma - Civics Test Requirement
Date: February 17, 2021
Position: Oppose
Committee: Ways and Means
Contact: Mary Pat Fannon, Executive Director, PSSAM

This bill requires that an individual take a certain civics test at a means determined by the State Board of Education and achieve a passing score of 60% to graduate from a public high school or alternatively obtain a Maryland high school diploma on or after January 1, 2023.

The Public Schools Superintendents' Association of Maryland (PSSAM), representing all twenty-four local school superintendents, **opposes** HB 1157.

PSSAM appreciates the sponsor's interest and enthusiasm regarding civics instruction. We too believe this is important content for students to learn and traditionally, all high school assessment exams include and accurately test the core concepts of civics and American Government.

Superintendents continue to advocate for local governance on all curriculum, as well as assessments used to measure student learning. Local school boards must have the flexibility to develop individual assessment policies and practices that reflect the specific and diverse needs of their system. We firmly believe that these responsibilities belong to local boards of education working together with the State Board of Education.

For the reasons noted above, PSSAM opposes House Bill 1157 and requests an unfavorable committee report.