



February 17, 2022

The Honorable Delores Kelley and Members
Senate Finance Committee
Miller Senate Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

Re: Support – SB 421 – Primary and Secondary Schools – Bus Driver Wages – Study

Dear Chair Kelley and Members of the Committee:

The Maryland School Bus Contractors Association (MSBCA) supports SB 421 – Primary and Secondary Schools – Bus Driver Wages – Study. MSBCA serves as the voice of the private school bus companies that contract with local Maryland school systems in 18 of Maryland’s 24 jurisdictions to own and operate the nearly 3500 contracted school buses that transport schoolchildren across the State. MSBCA remains committed to the safety of the students they transport and considers it a privilege to do so.

This emergency bill requires the Governor’s Workforce Development Board (GWDB) within the Maryland Department of Labor to evaluate and report on the possibility of paying higher wages to school bus drivers in the State by July 1, 2022.

As you well know, we are facing a severe school bus driver shortage. While there are certainly a number of contributing factors, one of the greatest among them is driver pay. Traditionally, school bus drivers earn a wage far lower than their fellow Class B Commercial Drivers License holders. In recent months and very much in reaction to the school bus driver strikes that took place in multiple counties, many local jurisdictions took action to increase school bus driver compensation. Some of these increases were permanent, others one-time bonus payments. This bill takes an important step in highlighting at the State level the important role school bus drivers play, and the importance of compensating them accordingly and uniformly.

Once again, MSBCA supports SB 421 and asks for a favorable report. Thank you for your consideration and your commitment to our State.

Sincerely,

Steve Nelson

Steve Nelson, President
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410.268.3099

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