

Testimony from Rowan Schober-Levine SB0031 - Baltimore City Board of School  
Commissioners – Student Members and Task Force to Study Compensation and Student  
Members

Before the Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

24 January 2023

Position: FAVORABLE

Good morning/afternoon members of the Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment  
Committee

My name is Rowan Schober-Levine and I'm a member of district 43A. I'm writing to give my full support of SB31 to give student members of the board expanded voting rights, the ability to participate in closed/executive sessions, to alter the process by which those students are chosen to be more democratic, and to establish a commission to research and make recommendations on board member compensation and adding a second student member of the board. As a student at Baltimore School for the Arts (BSA) I feel that it is important to give students more power. If we truly want to show the ability and intelligence of students why don't we expand the rights of the student member of the board? Students should be able to vote on bills that would affect them directly. If you go to BoardDocs you will see that the student member is banned from voting on matters which would affect them such as student disciplinary matters, personnel, and school closings, reopenings, and boundaries to name a few. If you are worried that we don't have the money I would encourage you to take a look at the points below. City Schools has a 1.6 billion dollar budget for FY 2023. In previous years, they spent 4-6 million dollars **annually** on school police overtime alone. Even with an expanded board and above state average compensation, this would only cost the district approximately \$200,000 (0.00013% of its total budget). In 2020 we spent \$6 million on "a no-bid contract to a brand-new company." For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Senate Education, Energy, and Environment Committee to issue a favorable report on SB0031. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Rowan Schober-Levine

43A

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