

Brandon Jackson testimony98.pdf

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Testimony of Brannndon D. Jackson

Good afternoon, Chair Guzzone, Vice Chair Rosapepe and members of the Budget and Taxation Committee. I am here to present on the Income Tax -Credit for Parent and Guardian Volunteers in Elementary and Secondary School Schools SB0198.

There are six primary types of parental engagement, and everything else branches off these six concepts:

1. Communication between parents and teachers/administration
2. Volunteer opportunities with the school or school functions
3. Role in the academic decision-making process
4. At-home learning and development
5. Community collaboration
6. Parenting

These functions of engagement are critical for every scholar as they matriculate through academia. Research shows when the community is involved:

1. Positive impact on academic achievement
2. Safer schools and communities
3. Students feel emotionally supported.
4. Mitigate bullying.
5. Increase accountability for students, staff, and the administration, to name a few.

Parental engagement is the marquee indicator for success in every school system, and every constituent should be afforded the opportunity to leverage it regardless of their level of income.

Today, as we work to stabilize the economy and combat inflation, everyday citizens feel the tightening of their purse strings. And parents call me to express their dilemma: to either forego wages or engage in school activities.

This is a horrible situation to be in. This bill is a step in the right direction. Giving parents the opportunity to supplement foregone wages from volunteering will be a tremendous step in helping to stabilize our community.

Every child should have the appropriate infrastructure to support their academic future. We make that possible by helping to level the playing field with this piece of legislation.

Parental engagement should always be a question of willingness, not affordability.

Thus, I respectfully urge the committee to issue a favorable report for SB0198

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Budget and Taxation Committee

Education, Business and
Administration Subcommittee

Pensions Subcommittee

Chair, Rules Committee

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THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
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Testimony of Senator Joanne C. Benson
SB 198: Income Tax – Credit for Parent and Guardian Volunteers
in Elementary and Secondary Schools

Good afternoon, Chairman Guzzone and esteemed members of the Budget and Taxation Committee. Senate Bill 198, entitled “*Income Tax – Credit for Parent and Guardian Volunteers in Elementary and Secondary Schools*,” This bill will allow:

“...eligible taxpayers who volunteer in [elementary and secondary] schools a credit against the State income tax; [it also requires] the State Department of Education, in consultation with the Comptroller, to develop and make available [an] application and tax credit certificate; requiring [the issuance of tax credit certificates by either: one,] a county board member [or, two, a] school administrator [...]; making the credit refundable under certain circumstances.”

Put simply: SB 198 both incentivizes and rewards volunteers in elementary and secondary schools. Put comprehensively, the bill specifies that: first, eligible taxpayers may receive \$20 per certified volunteer hour; second, volunteer claimants may not exceed \$500 (or 25 credited hours) in any given year.

This bill rewards those selfless individuals who already willingly donate their precious time to Maryland’s formative education institutions, and monetarily incentivizes growth in our educational communities, as a whole. Here, robust literature supports our legislative goals. At surface, it is plain that increased parental engagement in the education system serves a direct benefit to our communities by: foremost, promoting positive education and health behaviors for and between adolescents and their parents; and, noticeably, increasing students’ overall academic performance in routine grading and testing, all while reducing truancy. Even more benefit is provided by the finding. Offering more support to the same overall benefit, the American Psychological Association found that students who consider their school environment one where support, care, and their parents are present, stand less likely to succumb to the plagues of society that suffocate opportunity from our children’s’ lives before the education system has a chance to enshrine it in them.

Therefore, in what is testimony in brief only by necessity, my colleagues and all those who hear me now, I implore upon you the urgent and exigent need to enact this legislation to the benefit of every community, every school... every child, in our beloved State. Where we far too often forget about those who willfully labor away in the name of a more promising tomorrow, let us promise we are too invested in that same tomorrow. Today, the only way to do fulfill our obligation to that promise is for this respected committee to issue a report in full-throttled favor of Senate Bill 198.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and fellow members of the committee.