

BENJAMIN BROOKS
Legislative District 10
Baltimore County

Education, Energy, and the
Environment Committee
Energy Subcommittee

Chair, Joint Electric Universal
Service Program Workgroup



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TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB803
Education – Local Share of Major Education Aid- Nonrecurring Costs Exclusion
Budget & Taxation
February 28, 2024

Chair Guzzone, Vice-Chair Rosapepe, and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you on SB803: Education - Local Share of Major Education Aid - Nonrecurring Costs Exclusion. The purpose of this bill is to create a second deadline by which the counties and school systems can designate an expense as one-time, non-recurring.

Maryland’s “maintenance of effort” (MOE) school funding law, enacted by the General Assembly, requires that counties maintain the same amount of funding for education per pupil each year. However, not every investment needs to be a continued, yearly appropriation. Sometimes, there are one-time expenses or non-recurring costs.

Non-recurring costs allow county governments to provide one-time school funding for one-time education costs without triggering perpetual mandates. This allows for investments in things like computer labs, technology enhancements, new program costs, or even new library books to be exempted from the State’s MOE calculation. Currently, for school systems to receive a waiver for one-time investments and non-recurring costs, they must apply to Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) by March 31st.

However, the current system presents a major barrier for educational investments by local governments. The March deadline is several months before most counties complete their annual budgets and before they may be aware of extra funds which could be utilized for these one-time expenses. This means that counties have to plan for non-recurring costs before they know whether they have additional funds for schools. SB803 merely provides a second date of June 1st, by which the counties and school systems could agree to designate an expense as non-recurring. This will allow the counties additional time to finalize their budgeting process before seeking exemptions. Thus, providing them a second opportunity to seek their non-recurring exemptions.

When it comes to educating our students, we should not let available, local money be left on the table because of one arbitrary deadline. SB803 will give the counties more flexibility when it comes to investing in our students.

For these reasons, I am requesting a favorable report on SB803.

With kindest regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Benjamin T. Brooks".

Benjamin Brooks