

SB657_FAV_Henson_Testimony .pdf

Uploaded by: Delegate Henson

Position: FAV

SHANEKA HENSON
Legislative District 30A
Anne Arundel County

Ways and Means Committee

Joint Committee on
Children, Youth, and Families



The Maryland House of Delegates
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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 657
Anne Arundel County - Student Loan Assistance Repayment Program for
Educators - Established

Chair Brian J. Feldman
Vice Chair Cheryl C. Kagan
2 West
Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Dear Members of the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee,

I am writing to provide my testimony in strong support of Senate Bill 657, which authorizes Anne Arundel County to establish a Student Loan Assistance Repayment Program (LARP) for educators employed by the Anne Arundel County Public School System. As a co-sponsor of this bill alongside Senator Dawn Gile, I believe that this legislation is crucial for addressing the pressing need to recruit and retain qualified educators, particularly those who reflect the diversity of our student population.

The primary aim of Senate Bill 657 is to attract, recruit, and retain a diverse pool of educators who are committed to serving our students. By providing assistance in repaying higher education loans for educators who meet certain eligibility criteria, such as committing to five years of service, we can make teaching positions more financially attractive and demonstrate our commitment to supporting our valued educators.

It is imperative that our teacher workforce mirrors the diversity of our student population. Research consistently shows that students benefit from having teachers who share their cultural background and life experiences. Senate Bill 657 aligns with this research by incentivizing diverse educators to join and remain in our school system, ultimately enriching the educational experience for all students.

Furthermore, by offering loan repayment assistance, we send a clear message that we value the contributions of our educators and recognize the financial challenges they face. Teaching is a noble profession, but it often comes with significant student loan debt. This program will alleviate some of that burden, making it easier for educators to focus on their important work in the classroom.

While implementing such a program will require an increase in county expenditures for loan repayment assistance, the long-term benefits far outweigh the costs. Investing in high-quality teachers not only improves student outcomes but also strengthens our community as a whole. Similar programs implemented in other counties and at the state level have demonstrated success in attracting professionals to high-need areas and underserved communities. Senate Bill 657 adapts this concept specifically for recruiting and retaining teachers in Anne Arundel County.

In conclusion, I urge the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee to give Senate Bill 657 a favorable report. By supporting this bill, we are investing in the future of our students and our community. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'SHAN', with a large, sweeping flourish underneath.

Hon. Delegate Shaneka Henson

FINAL SB657 Support AACPS.pdf

Uploaded by: Grace Wilson

Position: FAV



SB657 ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY – STUDENT LOAN ASSISTANCE REPAYMENT PROGRAM FOR EDUCATORS – ESTABLISHED

February 28, 2024

Education, Energy, and the Environment

SUPPORT

Grace Wilson, Legislative & Policy Specialist (410.440.1758)

Anne Arundel County Public Schools (AACPS) supports **SB657 Anne Arundel County – Student Loan Assistance Repayment Program for Educators - Established**. This bill authorizes the Anne Arundel County Council to create the Anne Arundel County Student Loan Assistance Program for educators to assist in the repayment of student loans owned by educators employed by AACPS. The purpose of the program is to attract, recruit, and retain a diverse cadre of qualified educators in AACPS reflective of the student population within the county. Qualifying loans include a loan for undergraduate or graduate study that is obtained for tuition, educational expenses, or living expenses from a college, university, government, commercial, or nonprofit source. In order to benefit from the program, individuals must receive a graduate, professional, or undergraduate degree from an accredited college or university, be employed by AACPS, commit to serve in AACPS for a period of not less than five years, and receive an income that is less than the maximum eligible total income levels established by the County Council. Finally, the bill authorizes the Anne Arundel County Council to establish additional criteria for the program.

We recognize the educational benefits of a diverse workforce that enriches the educational experience of all AACPS students. Investing in the development of highly effective teachers and leaders that reflect our diversity and commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, and high-quality education for all AACPS students ensures that all students can grow, belong, and succeed.

AACPS teachers are valued as leaders and actively participate in making decisions that impact teaching and learning at the school level. We are proud of our teacher workforce and value them as a critical asset in contributing to student academic achievement. The Board believes that the quality of education is directly dependent on the quality of the teacher workforce, which is directly impacted by the school system's ability to recruit and retain high-quality educators.

AACPS supports resources such as loan assistance repayment programs to help recruit a more diverse teacher workforce. This program would provide a mechanism for educators employed by AACPS to receive student loan repayment assistance, if funded by the Anne Arundel County Council. Accordingly, AACPS respectfully requests a **FAVORABLE** committee report on SB657.

AACoSenDel_LoS_SB0657.pdf

Uploaded by: Senator Gile

Position: FAV

DAWN D. GILE
CHAIR



PAMELA BEIDLE
SARAH K. ELFRETH
CLARENCE K. LAM
JAMES ROSAPEPE
BRYAN W. SIMONAIRE

THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401
ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY DELEGATION

February 27, 2024

The Honorable Brian Feldman
Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
2 West Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Chairman Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and Members of the Committee:

The Anne Arundel County Senators met and voted on January 26, 2024, to endorse SB0657 - Anne Arundel County – Student Loan Assistance Repayment for Teachers – Established.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Dawn D. Gile".

Dawn D. Gile
Chair, Anne Arundel County Senate
Delegation

DG Written Testimony_SB0657.pdf

Uploaded by: Senator Gile

Position: FAV



THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401
ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY DELEGATION

**Testimony in Support of SB0657 - Anne Arundel County - Student Loan Assistance
Repayment Program for Educators - Established**

Mr. Chair, Madame Vice Chair, and Members of the Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee:

SB0657 would authorize Anne Arundel County to establish a Student Loan Assistance Repayment Program for Educators employed by Anne Arundel County Public Schools (AACPS). The purpose of the program is to attract, recruit, and retain a diverse cadre of qualified educators in AACPS that reflects the student population within county schools. The program must be administered by AACPS. Funds for the program must be as provided on an annual basis in the county budget in an appropriation separate from the county's appropriation to the operating budget of the Anne Arundel County Board of Education. Funds for the program may be used to cover administrative expenses of the program.

Background

Chapter 140 of 2018 authorized Howard County to establish a Student Loan Assistance Repayment Program for Teachers employed by the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS). In June 2023, the Howard County Council unanimously passed Council Bill 14 which established the Student Loan Assistance Repayment Program for Teachers pursuant to the 2018 enabling legislation passed by the Maryland General Assembly. As the benefit design and funding amount is up to the locality, Howard County provided \$1.5 million over five years for student loan repayments.

Solution

SB0657 would enable Anne Arundel County to establish a student loan repayment program for educators who:

1. Receives a graduate, professional, or undergraduate degree from an accredited college or university;

2. Obtains employment as an educator in AACPS;
3. Commits to serve in AACPS for at least five years;
4. Receives an income that is less than the maximum eligible total income levels established by the county, including any additional sources of income the individual may earn;
5. Is not in default on any student loan; and
6. Satisfies any other criteria established by the county for the program.

Loan assistance provided under the program must be in the amount and on the terms and conditions established by the county. An applicant for assistance in the repayment of a commercial loan must demonstrate to the county that the loan was used for tuition, educational expenses, or living expenses for graduate or undergraduate study.

Per the Fiscal Note, SB0657 would not require any additional state resources. To the extent that Anne Arundel County establishes a student loan repayment assistance program pursuant to this bill, financial obligations will be entirely up to the county. For these reasons, I respectfully request a favorable report on SB0657.

SB0657.pdf

Uploaded by: Suzanne Duffy

Position: UNF

SB0657 is more government overreach and a perfect way for MARYLAND to go broke.

Yet another BAD Bill... say NO,

Are there any fiscally conservative members of this Maryland congressional cabal?

Suzanne Price

AACo, MD