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DEPUTY MAJORITY WHIP

Economic Matters Committee



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

Tuesday, January 30, 2024

**Testimony of Delegate Marlon Amprey in Support of House Bill 69 Live Near
Where You Teach Program**

Dear Members of the Environment and Transportation Committee,

It is widely known that teachers have a tremendous impact on students' lives and play a pivotal role in shaping future advocates. Teachers make up a huge part of our future generation and therefore, the future of Baltimore and the State of Maryland. Not only do teachers contribute greatly to our community, but also the members of the school staff such as school psychologists, paraprofessionals, school secretaries, guidance counselors, etc., play a tremendous role in our students' lives. All of these members work endlessly to make sure their students feel safe, comfortable, and understood in the classroom environment and beyond. Therefore, it is our responsibility to make sure these educators are getting the best assistance and are rewarded for their investment in our youth.

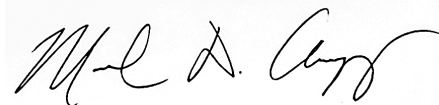
House Bill 69 enables the Community Development Administration in the Department of Housing and Community Development to administer a home buyer assistance program that assists teachers and school staff members to receive certain low-interest mortgages for the purchase of homes near where the member is employed; it also enables the Administration to administer certain community development projects to provide school staff members with certain financial assistance to buy homes near where the individual is employed under certain circumstances. The 'Live Near Where You Teach' initiative is notable for its special emphasis on educators, providing support that is tailored to educators and support staff. Its unique goal of establishing a direct line of communication between educators and their communities is what makes it stand out. The program's accountability is improved by its specificity, which guarantees a focused and effective implementation that directly benefits teachers and the educational environment they contribute to.

We are currently experiencing a nationwide teacher shortage and wish to bring in and retain teachers in the State of Maryland. This program made for educators will not only support our school staff by providing financial benefits, but will help teachers establish their roots in their communities. The program will help retain teachers while encouraging, incentivizing, and attracting teachers in areas where we need them the most. Through this legislation, we seek to add to the current programs for employer-assisted housing financing. A new program dedicated to our dedicated educators is *needed* to ensure that all of Maryland's eligible school staff have access to financial resources to live near their respective schools, incentivizing them to stay and help their students prosper.

The enactment of HB69 will further financially support our teachers and address the staffing shortages in Maryland's schools. Additionally, creating more homeowners who are teachers will ensure we have more strong social pillars in needy communities. Living in the same neighborhoods as their students will grant Maryland's teachers and school staff the opportunity to better understand and connect with their students and improve educational outcomes while incentivizing home ownership in needy communities.

For these reasons, I strongly urge a favorable report on House Bill 69.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Marlon Amprey". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "M".

Delegate Marlon Amprey
40th Legislative District of Maryland