



HOUSE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

HOUSE BILL 184

NONPUBLIC SCHOOLS – TRANSCRIPTS – PROHIBITION ON PUNITIVE MEASURES RELATED TO STUDENT DEBT

JANUARY 23, 2025

OPPOSE

Maryland CAPE is our state's chapter and one of 40 state chapters of the Council for American Private Education. Our network includes the Catholic, Christian, Evangelical Lutheran, Friends, Independent, Jewish, Lutheran, Montessori, Muslim, and Seventh Day Adventist school communities. We speak on behalf of over 135,000 nonpublic school students attending over one thousand nonpublic schools across our great state of Maryland.

Tuition is a fundamental means by which nonpublic schools cover the numerous expenses required for proper maintenance and operation. For this reason, it may sometimes be necessary for a school to have the option of implementing certain punitive measures if a responsible party fails to fulfill the agreed-upon tuition payment. The tuition agreement between a parent or caregiver and the school is entered into voluntarily, with clear terms. If a parent or caregiver attempts to avoid or renege on their financial obligations, it is essential that the school has the ability to encourage them to meet their commitments.

While our schools hold great respect for our parent community, it must be acknowledged that, on occasion, some individuals may attempt to exploit the system. It is important for schools to retain this important measure to address such situations and ensure that debts owed to the institution are paid.

It is also crucial to recognize that many of our schools operate under tight budgets, meaning that even small payments can significantly impact their financial stability. It is important that our schools retain their independence rather than taking away what is often the school's only resource to ensure that the money owed to them is paid, as House Bill 184 would do.

We therefore respectfully request an UNFAVORABLE report on House Bill 184.

Thank you.