

House Bill 490

Education – The Blueprint for Maryland’s Future – Revisions

Final Position: FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS

Chair and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on House Bill 490. I offer this testimony as a municipal elected official, retired United States Air Force veteran, and community leader who has worked closely with youth, educators, and families across Maryland.

The Blueprint for Maryland’s Future represents one of the most significant investments our State has made in education. Continued refinement is appropriate when revisions strengthen outcomes, expand opportunity, and maintain accountability to taxpayers and students alike.

House Bill 490 advances several important goals. Strengthening career and technical education alignment with workforce demand helps ensure students graduate with meaningful credentials and clear pathways into employment or higher education. Expanding recognition of apprenticeship and induction pathways supports recruitment and retention within the educator workforce while creating additional avenues for qualified individuals to serve Maryland students.

The expansion of wraparound services, including academic interventions and behavioral supports, reflects an understanding that student success requires stability both inside and outside the classroom. Local governments regularly see the impact when schools are equipped to address the full needs of students.

While these provisions move Maryland forward, several areas require amendment to preserve transparency and equity. The removal of annual technology reporting requirements reduces visibility into whether students across jurisdictions have equitable access to devices and connectivity. Accountability measures should be modernized rather than eliminated.

In addition, extended authority to limit dual enrollment opportunities should include clear safeguards to ensure access is not unintentionally restricted for students seeking accelerated academic or workforce pathways. Local consultation and equity review should accompany any limitation.

Finally, as teacher certification pathways evolve, ongoing monitoring should ensure implementation continues to support a diverse and highly qualified educator workforce reflective of Maryland’s communities.

For these reasons, I respectfully submit a position of Favorable With Amendments. The goals of this legislation are sound, and with targeted adjustments, the State can maintain both innovation and accountability while preparing students for long-term success.

Respectfully submitted,

The Honorable, Dr. Cashenna A. Cross

Councilwoman At Large

City of Glenarden, Maryland