



MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND  
WOMEN'S DEMOCRATIC CLUB

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**Senate Bill 0204 Public Schools - Maryland Civic Excellence Program - Established**

**Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee – 2/2/26  
SUPPORT**

Thank you for this opportunity to submit written testimony concerning an important priority of the **Montgomery County Women's Democratic Club (WDC)** for the 2026 legislative session. WDC is one of Maryland's largest and most active Democratic clubs with hundreds of politically active members, including many elected officials.

**WDC urges the passage of SB0204.** This bill will create a voluntary Maryland Civic Excellence Program that allows schools to recognize students for strong civic knowledge and engagement. It helps students learn how their government works and how they can take part in their communities. I am especially passionate about this bill because I am in high school and see firsthand how many students don't learn enough about civics. Programs like this can make a real difference by helping students understand how to be active, informed citizens. Passing this bill is important for women and children because learning about civics helps young people to become active community members and take part in processes that directly affect them. Students who understand democracy are more likely to vote, get involved in their communities, and speak up about issues that are important to them. This is especially important for girls and women, who are still largely underrepresented in leadership positions. In Maryland, roughly one-third of 18-year-olds are not registered to vote, showing that while we have made progress in terms of improving civic engagement, we still have a ways to go. SB0204 is an optional, low-cost way to support this improvement using existing school resources.

**We ask for your support for SB0204 and strongly urge a favorable Committee report.**

Camille DiGiovanni  
WDC *NextGen*  
Advancing Democracy  
Subcommittee

Cynthia Rubenstein  
WDC President

Kate Stein  
WDC Advocacy Chair