

TO: Senate Education, Energy, and Environment Committee

BILL: Senate Bill (SB) 99 – Open Meetings Act – County Boards of Education – Enhanced Requirements (Local Boards of Education Transparency Act)

DATE: February 4, 2025

POSITION: Support

Chair Feldman and Members of the Senate Education, Energy, and Environment Committee,

The Maryland State Board of Education (State Board) shares the following information in support of **SB 99**, which would enhance the Open Meetings Act requirements for county boards of education by strengthening standards for public notice, access, and documentation of board meetings.

The State Board appreciates the intent of SB 99 to promote transparency in public education governance and recognizes that open and accessible decision-making is essential to maintaining confidence and trust in local and state education institutions.

Transparency is a core principle of the State Board’s work. In furtherance of that, the State Board provides advance notice of meetings, publishes agendas and materials, and deliberates openly on matters affecting students, families, educators, and communities across Maryland. The State Board holds itself to the same standards of openness and accountability that it expects of local boards of education, consistent with the Open Meetings Act and other applicable laws.

The State Board remains committed to working collaboratively with the General Assembly, county boards of education, and other stakeholders to promote transparency throughout Maryland’s public education system. The Board stands ready to share its own practices and experiences, as appropriate, to support consistent and effective implementation of open governance principles statewide.

The State Board requests that the committee consider this information as it deliberates **SB 99**. Please contact Zach Hands, Executive Director of the State Board, at Zachary.hands1@maryland.gov or at 443-915-6094, if you would like any additional information.