



MONTGOMERY COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

Expanding Opportunity and Unleashing Potential

15 West Gude Drive ♦ Suite 100 ♦ Rockville, Maryland 20850

BILL: House Bill 288

TITLE: State Superintendent of Schools - Prolonged State of Emergency - Authority to Declare

DATE: February 11, 2026

POSITION: Support

COMMITTEE: Ways and Means

CONTACT: Patricia Ursprung, Coordinator, Legislative Affairs

The Montgomery County Board of Education supports House Bill 288.

This bill authorizes the State Superintendent of Schools to declare a prolonged state of emergency for an event that prevents regular, in-person attendance at a public school for at least 14 consecutive school days. Currently, the authority to declare a state of emergency impacting schools rests with the governor.

The state superintendent is the state-wide authority on education matters. The Montgomery County Board of Education and Dr. Thomas Taylor, superintendent of Montgomery County Public Schools, believe it is good practice to permit the state superintendent, who will likely have the most knowledge and information on a given situation and who is in frequent contact with school systems, to declare an emergency impacting the education system in the state. Currently, this power rests with the governor.

This bill may streamline the process for declaring an emergency impacting education and give the power to do so to the person in the best position to act. As a result, the Montgomery County Board of Education supports House Bill 288 and requests a **favorable** report.