

May 27, 2022

The Honorable Bill Ferguson
President of the Maryland Senate
H-107 State House
Annapolis, MD 21401

The Honorable Adrienne A. Jones
Speaker of the House of Delegates
H-101 State House
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Mr. President and Madam Speaker:

In accordance with Article II, Section 17 of the Maryland Constitution, I have vetoed House Bill 433 and Senate Bill 157 – *Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners – Student Members and Task Force to Study Compensation and Student Members*.

A strong education system depends on vibrant input and engagement from the students and families it serves. Student board members play a valuable role in the process, but this bill overreaches by proposing to include those members in matters relating to capital and operating budgets. This proposed delegation of responsibility jeopardizes the fiduciary responsibility to exercise due care and judgment in the expenditures of a budget that exceeds \$1 billion in state tax dollars. Even the most business-savvy board members will require several years of experience working with the school budget in order to deal with a basic level of competency on a budget of such complexity. We cannot expect that a high school senior, serving a one-year term, would be capable of providing a level of meaningful budget oversight that our citizens rightfully expect.

Board members, who must deal with potential manipulation and influence in their handling of the budget, are also legally accountable, to include potential incarceration, for any malfeasance. I cannot in good conscience allow a young 17- or 18-year-old student to be at risk of such a level of culpability. We should be actively looking for ways to ensure students a greater voice in the process, but this measure is not well thought out.

For these reasons, I have vetoed House Bill 433 and Senate Bill 157.

Sincerely,

Lawrence J. Hogan, Jr.
Governor