



To: Chair Kaiser and members of the Ways and Means Committee  
From: Shamoyia Gardiner, Education Policy Director  
Re: House Bill 724: Education – Public Charter Schools – Virtual Learning Programs  
Date: February 19, 2020  
Position: Oppose

The fiscal note for House Bill 724 makes a great case against its passage:

“Virtual charter schools can present difficulties with respect to tracking school enrollment and attendance, and thus for determining appropriate State and local funding. According to various sources, including the Washington Post, a virtual charter school in Ohio, Electronic Classroom of Tomorrow (ECOT), closed abruptly in January 2018 after the State ordered ECOT to repay \$80 million because the school was being paid based on inflated enrollment reports.”<sup>1</sup>

Implementing HB 724 would deprive the nearly 1 million Maryland public school students of financial resources, necessary to ensure that the State continues to meet its Constitutional obligation. However, as HB 724 fails to repeal a prohibitive provision of existing law, that won't come to fruition. **ACY urges an unfavorable report on this bill.**

---

<sup>1</sup> Department of Legislative Services. *HB 724*. Page 3. February 2020.  
[http://mgaleg.maryland.gov/2020RS/fnotes/bil\\_0004/hb0724.pdf](http://mgaleg.maryland.gov/2020RS/fnotes/bil_0004/hb0724.pdf)