

# BALTIMORE CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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*Mayor, City of Baltimore*

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*Chair, Baltimore City Board of  
School Commissioners*

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*Chief Executive Officer*

**Testimony of the  
Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners  
In Support of  
House Bill 1250  
Education Length of the School Year  
Declared State of Emergency (Kathryn Marie Carmello's Law)**

**February 28, 2020**

The Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners supports House Bill 1250 because it authorizes a local board of education to decrease the length of the school year for each school day affected by a declared state of emergency for any public school located in the area threatened by the emergency, without approval of the State Board of Education.

This bill, as the legislation passed last year to allow school boards to set the start and end dates of each public school system, provides greater flexibility to the school boards. While State of Emergency's are rare, it does impact the school calendar and generally occurs during the school year. In years with severe weather, the ability to meet the 180 days and 1080 school hours at elementary and middle schools or 1170 hours at high schools during a 10-month period can be problematic. Even with the ability to seek a waiver, the Maryland State Board of Education has the ability to deny the waivers in whole or in part. This legislation will allow the school boards' autonomy in making appropriate educational choices for its students.

For the foregoing reasons, the Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners supports House Bill 1250 and urges a favorable report.

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