

MARLON AMPREY  
Legislative District 40  
Baltimore City

Environment and Transportation  
Committee



The Maryland House of Delegates  
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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

March 3, 2020

**Testimony of Delegate Marlon Amprey in Support of HB 918: Higher Education -  
Maryland Loan Assistance Repayment Program - Underrepresented Teachers**

Dear Chair McIntosh and Members of the Appropriations Committee,

As a former educator myself, this bill truly hits home for me. The simple fact of the matter is that only about 25% of Maryland teachers come from historically underrepresented groups, and that figure drops even lower if you control for gender, or a specific minority. According to the Brookings Institution, just over half of American students aged 5-17 are white, while over 80% of young teachers (age 25-34 with a bachelor's degree teaching in pre-k through high school) are white. Brookings data also strongly suggests that the largest individual driver of the racial and ethnic mismatch between students and their teachers involves racial and ethnic differences in college completion.

**House Bill 918** is being introduced this session for the express purpose of addressing this imbalance via a loan repayment assistance program. Individuals from minority groups underrepresented in professional education, specifically Black and Latino men, will be eligible for the program. Participants in the program will receive assistance repaying higher education loans, in exchange for living and working in Maryland, especially for school districts in which a large proportion of the student body is

- A) Living in poverty
- B) Has large achievement gaps between subpopulations of students

By targeting our struggling districts, many of which have large populations of students from minority groups, this bill hopes to improve the quality of and access to public education by recruiting and retaining skilled educators while helping correct the racial and ethnic mismatch between students and educators.

This bill is not a critique of educators who are not currently underrepresented, as I expect it to be perceived by some, rather, we are simply trying to make the field more equitable, and provide our black and brown students with educators who look like them because it has a profound impact on their success. Furthermore, there is a growing body of evidence suggesting that outcomes such as test scores, attendance, and suspension rates are affected by the demographic match between teachers and students. The testimony you will hear today will further elaborate on this evidence from the perspective of academic professionals who have firsthand experience with the subject matter.

Now more than ever, as the pandemic exacerbates inequities within our educational system, we owe it to our students to do all that we can to make sure they receive an education that works for them and helps pave the way to success later in life.

For this reason, **I urge a favorable report on House Bill 918**

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Marlon Amprey". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "M" and a distinct "A".

Delegate Marlon Amprey  
40<sup>th</sup> Legislative District - MD