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WRITTEN TESTIMONY

Senate Bill 827 Nonpublic Schools – Adequate Health Services – Eligibility for Reimbursement

Senate Education, Health and Environmental Affairs Committee

March 3, 2021

Position: Support

Background: Senate Bill 827 (SB827) would allow eligible nonpublic schools to be reimbursed up to 50% of the cost of adequate school health services by their county government. For a school to qualify for reimbursement the school's tuition must be below the state's per-a-pupil average, the school must not discriminate against students as defined by the bill, and it must be eligible for the state's nonpublic school textbooks and technology program and the nonpublic aging schools program.

Written Comments: The Baltimore Jewish Council supports excellence in education. Area Jewish Day schools educate more than 8,000 students a year. For much of the Jewish community, a Jewish Day School education is not a choice, it is a necessity. Our schools strive to keep tuition as low as possible but must still cover their operating costs. Most of our schools serve a student population that is 20-40% FARMS eligible. Adequate school health services are important for the safety and well-being of students, however, the high costs for school nurses and other medical professionals are often barer. SB827 would help many low-tuition nonpublic schools and their students by covering up to half the cost of health services in the schools, making students safer and healthier.

For these reasons, we ask for a favorable report on SB827.

The Baltimore Jewish Council, a coalition of central Maryland Jewish organizations and congregations, advocates at all levels of government, on a variety of social welfare, economic and religious concerns, to protect and promote the interests of The Associated Jewish Community Federation of Baltimore, its agencies and the Greater Baltimore Jewish community.

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