

## **HB 2: Congressional Redistricting Plan OPPOSE**

Good afternoon, Chairwoman Healey and the House Rules and Executive Appointments Committee.

AFT-Maryland is the statewide organization for unions such as the Maryland Professional Employees Council, AFT Healthcare-Maryland, Baltimore County Federation of Public Employees, City Union of Baltimore, and the Baltimore Teachers Union. We submit this written testimony in opposition to HB 2, the Congressional redistricting map proposed by the Maryland Congressional Redistricting Committee as it drastically reduces Baltimore City's representation in our Nation's Capital from three congressional districts to one.

Maintaining three congressional representatives is imperative to the public school system in Baltimore City, mainly because, unlike all other jurisdictions in the state, the vast majority of Baltimore City public schools fall under the jurisdiction of Title I of the Every Student Succeeds Act. Because maps drawn where Title I schools are packed into a limited number of districts threatens to diminish the voices of students and their families who rely so heavily on federal funding for their schools in order to have vital education services met. In addition, because Baltimore's hundreds of Title I schools must have multiple, strong voices fighting for fair funding and accountability standards on Capitol Hill, AFT-Maryland opposes HB 2.

### **What is Title I?**

Title I is a provision in the Every Student Succeeds Act that calls for federal grants to help schools where a large number of students come from low-income families. Additionally, Title I schools, through the Every Student Succeeds Act, are held to strict accountability standards; when those standards are not met, those schools can be put under comprehensive or targeted assistance programs designed to identify causes for the school's inability to meet those standards.

### **How has Title I been implemented in Maryland? What districts have it?**

Each of the 24 counties and local education agencies in the state of Maryland has at least one Title I school, and several counties have an especially large number. For instance, in the 2020-21 school year, the Maryland State Department of Education reported 446 public schools statewide were Title I schools; 128 of those schools are in Baltimore City.

This means that 29% of all Title I schools in Maryland reside in just one district. As Baltimore City currently lists 162 schools in its portfolio, this means 79% percent, or about 4 out of every

5 of our schools are Title I, making them eligible for additional federal funds in exchange for stricter accountability standards.

Federal funds and accountability standards flow from the federal Every Student Succeeds Act are vital to the schools and students of Baltimore City. Because the map proposed by the Maryland Congressional Redistricting Committee threatens to diminish the voices of Baltimore City schools, the vast majority of which rely on Title I funding and are held to ESSA accountability standards, AFT-Maryland opposes HB2. Thank you.