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Frederick and Carroll Counties

Judiciary Committee

Subcommittees

Family Law

Public Safety

Task Force to Study Crime
Classification and Penalties



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

HB 266, Student Education Equity in Funding Act

Dear Chair Kaiser and Vice-Chair Washington,

Thank you for this opportunity to bring before you and the committee a bill which I think is both timely and urgent, HB 266- Student Education Equity in Funding Act. This piece of legislation would assist Marylanders with the unforeseen cost to augment their children's education because of the COVID 19 related school closures. Each eligible student would receive grants of \$1000 per semester. The grant money may be used for tuition, fees, textbooks, uniforms, fees for special instruction, and computer related expense.

The inspiration for this legislation comes from the obvious lack of schooling that Maryland's children have experienced over the last year. As of this fall, Maryland was one of six states where public schools remained substantially closed. I am sure we can all agree that virtual learning can't take the place of in-person learning. The bottom line, our students are falling behind in academic achievement and socialization, and suffering from depression.

Article VIII, Section 1 states that the state establish and guarantee a "thorough and efficient System of Free Public Schools." Perpetual emergency orders issued by the governor does not alleviate our duty to ensure that our next generation is educated.

The Brookings institute study which I have submitted for your review has study models which suggest "... that the loss of learning during the extraordinary systemic crisis of World War II still had negative impact on former students' lives some 40 years later."

Dr. Sonja Santelises, CEO of Baltimore City Schools states in a report, *Update on second semester: In-Person Learning and Vaccines*, that the number of students failing one or more courses in the first quarter has increased" over the same quarter last year. In fact, over 50% of City public school grades 2-12 students are failing at least one course.

Parents and guardians have had no choice but to take off from work to teach their children or to supplement their child's education in other ways ranging from hiring tutors to enrolling in a non-public school. All extra costs to the family budget that were unanticipated this time last year.

As we are funding programs to help our business community and non-profit organizations, I would urge that we think of the cost to our families with school aged children who are in dire need of assistance with educating the next generation of Marylanders and urge a favorable vote on HB 266.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dan Cox".

Delegate Dan Cox, District 4
Frederick and Carroll Counties