

BRIAN GRIFFITHS

February 3, 2021

The Honorable Anne Kaiser
Chair, House Ways & Means Committee
House Office Building, 6 Bladen St.
Annapolis, MD 21041

Dear Madam Chair and members of the Committee,

I write to you today in **opposition to House Bill 629**, County Boards of Education – Student Member – Voting. House Bill 629 would strip the ability of Student Members of County Boards of Education from casting a decisive vote on issues before the Board.

Comically, the sponsor has referred to his bill as the “School Board Gridlock Reduction Act.” Bluntly, what this bill is actually little more than an insult to Student Members of County Boards of Education and insulting to the students they represent. This bill takes what is ultimately a local concern related to one County Board of Education and blows it out of proportion to impact School Boards across the entire state.

Student board members in many counties across the state are integral parts of their local Boards of Education. They provide a student perspective that older, elected Board Members may not totally grasp. Suggesting that a Student Member cannot be the deciding vote on an issue basically neuters the ability of the Student Member to do anything to influence policy.

The proposal in this bill is worse than removing the vote from Student Members altogether. Instead of eliminating the member entirely, the bill suggests that the opinion of Student Members should only count when their opinion does not mean anything.

This bill is ultimately pointless and does not address the underlying concerns of the sponsor. I urge you all to **vote no on House Bill 629**.

Respectfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Brian Griffiths', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Brian Griffiths