

Testimony in Support of Senate Bill 785

State Board of Education Membership and Terms— Capability and Capacity Study of Education Agencies

House Ways and Means Committee

March 31, 2021

1:30 pm

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Government Relations

The Maryland State Education Association supports Senate Bill 785, which would do a number of things, including (but not limited to): requiring the Governor to appoint qualified members to the State Board of Education who possess experience, knowledge, and expertise relative to their duties and responsibilities as members of the Board; requiring the Accountability and Implementation Board (AIB) to work with a consultant in conducting a capability and capacity study of the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE), the Maryland Higher Education Commission, the Maryland Department of Labor, and other government entities charged with the implementation of the Blueprint for Maryland's Future; and requiring the AIB to submit the findings of the study to the Governor and the General Assembly.

MSEA represents 75,000 educators and school employees who work in Maryland's public schools, teaching and preparing our 896,837 students for careers and jobs of the future. MSEA also represents 39 local affiliates in every county across the state of Maryland, and our parent affiliate is the 3 million-member National Education Association (NEA).

With the enactment of the Blueprint for Maryland's Future, our state is about to embark upon an historic, multifaceted implementation process—one that will involve educators across the state; various local and state elected officials and agencies; and a significant amount of state and federal tax dollars. This is a consequential endeavor. As such, MSEA believes it should involve the implementation of processes and practices aimed at ensuring the most qualified individuals are put into decision-making

positions. Further, said implementation must be informed and guided by a clear, pragmatic understanding of the capability and capacity of the major institutions and agencies involved.

We whole-heartedly support this legislation because we believe its goals and objectives meet the urgency and the significance of this moment. We were one of largest, strongest, and most vocal advocates for the Blueprint because we believe that it is the map our state needs to guide us to the future all of our students deserve and the future we want for our state. To that end, we stand in solidarity with the bill sponsors, who along with us were members of the Kirwan Commission. We share their unequivocal desire to ensure the Blueprint's success and stand ready to support efforts we believe will aid in that success.

We urge a favorable report on Senate Bill 785.