

Chair and Committee Members
The Ways and Means Committee
Md House of Delegates.

February 2, 2021

Dear Madam Chair, and respected Committee Members,

Subj: Mohan- HB 0629-County Boards of Education- Student Member- Voting-
Unfavorable.

I am a Higher Education Professor as well as a parent. I have noticed that my students are well informed about current issues, in fact, often better informed than many older people. They are polite and articulate about their opinions and are able to justify their positions with evidence. A large part of my job involves teaching students the difference between opinion and evidence and a socially acceptable manner to discuss one's opinions and disagreements.

I have followed the paths of several students who have been appointed as the Student Members of local Boards of Education, particularly the Baltimore County and Howard County Boards of Education. Student members have performed admirably in their task in representing the interests of their fellow students. Sometimes, they have done a better job in representing their fellow students than parents and other appointees to the Board of Education.

A Student Member for the Board of Education is appointed in a rigorous refereed process, which is considerably more competitive and supervised than any other Board of Education member. In addition, their youth makes them subject to dismissal from their fellow board members, and they often have to demonstrate superior maturity and comprehension of the issues just in order to be accepted. I cannot accept, under these circumstances, that the Student Member can be given any less privileges than the other members of the Board. A vote is the ultimate way of making one's voice heard in a democracy- Student Members of the Boards have repeatedly proved that they are more than worthy of exercising this privilege.

Thank you,

Sincerely,

Jyoti Mohan

