

## HB0394 Public Schools - Fees for Summer School Courses – Prohibition

Stance: Support

Testimony: My name is Adiena C. Britt and I reside in the 45<sup>th</sup> Legislative District in Baltimore City. I am in offering testimony in support of HB0394. Charging fees in order to obtain a credit for a course that a student fails is just wrong. Especially in a School System that is supposed to be “Free Public Education” in any jurisdiction. This current practice negatively impacts lower income households, and creates unnecessary situations of stigma and decision-making that should not be occurring to our residents at all. No one should have to decide if they have to forgo paying a bill or buy food because they need to pay for a class that their child has failed.

Most of the time, children fail classes due to a lack of resources to begin with. I know, within Baltimore City, students have to bus across town for hours in order to reach school in the first place. There are chronic social issues that negatively impact students in low-income households, including little to no food, inability to access additional assistance when they are struggling in class, lack of access to technology including but not limited to high-cost calculators, computers, and library access. These things all lead to the potentiality that a student can fail a class, mainly due to a lack of resources.

Our current system offers fee waivers for such things as college admission applications and financial aid requests. If students need this type of assistance at the end of a school tenure, why is it so hard to fathom that financial assistance would be required beforehand should a class be failed? Charging for Summer School in a Public School System boils down to a “Pay for Play” approach that will always negatively impact students and parents from lower-income households. This practice needs to stop.

Please allow bill HB0394 to pass through to the full House and Senate to be voted on and passed into Law.

Thank you.

Adiena C. Britt

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