

Testimony OPPOSING HB 415 Funding - Scholarships for Nonpublic School Students

Dear Chair McIntosh and Appropriations Committee Members,

I oppose HB 415, Funding - Scholarships for Nonpublic School Students.

Public funds should not be used for private school education. All Maryland students can attend our excellent public schools, and if their parents choose to send them to private schools that is their choice and should be at their expense. This program takes money from our public schools and diverts it to private institutions. We need to make sure ALL our public funds designated for education go only to our public schools.

When Gov. Hogan began the BOOST voucher program in 2015, the average amount a student was given to reduce tuition at private or charter schools was about \$2,000. The actual tuition at most private or charter schools was about \$10,000 in 2015. This BOOST program is NOT enabling low-income students from poor performing schools to afford tuition at private schools, as is claimed by supporters. In 2017, 78% of the students who had participated in the BOOST voucher program were already enrolled in private schools. The BOOST program DID NOT BROADEN OPTIONS for students in public schools, it mostly benefited students who were already enrolled in private schools.

Similar programs in Nevada, Indiana and Wisconsin found that the majority of students who received vouchers never went to public schools, would have gone to private schools anyway and were NOT from low-income neighborhoods.

Respectfully,

Gail Jankowski
Proud Graduate of:
Maryland Public Schools
University of Maryland, College Park

Parent of Two Graduates of Maryland Public Schools
Two Graduates of Maryland Universities

Grandparent of 3 current (and 2 future) students of Maryland Public Schools