



The Honorable Guy Guzzone
Chair, Senate Budget and Taxation
3 West, Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

March 2, 2022

Senate Bill 706
Nonpublic Education Programs – Children with Disabilities – Costs of Teacher Salaries
FAVORABLE

Dear Chair Guzzone, Vice-Chair Rosapepe and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for this opportunity. I am the Education Director with the Woodbourne School. Our students have experienced significant trauma in their lives and are working, through intensive support and intervention, to develop the needed skills to rejoin their community and experience success. These students have often been out of school, incarcerated, or are experiencing significant mental health issues and require a great deal from their educators.

To support our students, we are a 12-month program. Our teachers work all year with students whose challenges are so significant that they cannot attend a traditional public school. These teachers are paid less than Baltimore City teachers who work for 10 months a year. This significant pay discrepancy has made it very difficult to recruit teachers for our school. In August, we had only 5 teachers for our entire middle and high school. This winter, we had three teachers leave for higher paying jobs in the public school system. Teachers leaving and the subsequent time that it takes to replace them means that our students who need the most help do not have the resources and the classes that they require. It means that every one of the teachers I have hired since August, have all been individuals new to the teaching field without educational training who are learning to be educators as they are teaching. This inability to attract experienced educators or retain a consistent staff drastically impacts our ability to provide teachers to the students who need them the most.

For these reasons, I am asking you to support Bill SB 706 I am asking for equal pay to hire and retain teachers for our most at risk students so they can experience success and rejoin their communities.

Thank you for your time.

Bryon Fracchia
Education Director
The Woodbourne School