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Budget and Taxation Committee
Chair, Capital Budget Subcommittee

Chair, Senate Democratic Caucus

THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Testimony of Senator Craig J. Zucker
Senate Bill - 706 - Nonpublic Educational Programs - Children with Disabilities -
Costs of Teacher Salaries
Senate Budget and Taxation Committee
March 2nd, 2022
1:00pm
Position: SUPPORT

Good afternoon Chairman Guzzone, Vice Chairman Rosapepe, and distinguished members of the committee. It is my pleasure to testify today in **support of Senate Bill - 706 - Nonpublic Educational Programs - Children with Disabilities - Costs of Teacher Salaries.**

Senate Bill 706 requires the State and County to provide teachers at a nonpublic educational program a salary that is equivalent to salaries received by public school teachers. If pay between public school teacher salaries and similarly trained and experienced nonpublic teachers in a county are different, the State will provide the difference in pay. The additional funding will be paid for through the State and the County in the same proportion and funding for the other components of the nonpublic educational program may not be reduced to provide teacher salaries.

Maryland is fortunate to have a robust system in place utilizing nonpublic special education schools. The public schools continue to refer their most challenged students to these specialized, therapeutic programs. Without equitable salary parity for teachers who are dedicated to their profession, we deprive our students of an appropriate education. It is critical to point out that these special schools are serving publicly funded students and were established to serve the most severely disabled students. We should not expect them to be paid less than public school teachers.

For these reasons, I urge a favorable report on Senate Bill 706. Thank you for your kind consideration.