

## TESTIMONY

Education Health and Environmental Affairs Committee

Written Testimony

Wednesday, February 16, 2022

Annapolis, Maryland

1:00 pm

Good Afternoon, Chairman Pinsky, Senator Sydnor III, honorable members of the Senate Education Health and Environmental Affairs Committee. I am Sharon Y. Blake, a resident of Baltimore County and a retired 43-year career public school educator in the state of Maryland. I support Senate Bill 414 because it is an excellent way to create a level of accountability for the Baltimore County Executive to his constituents. Indeed, because “all politics are local,” giving the Baltimore County Executive, a local elected official, a voice on the school board enables the County Executive to have a direct and clear understanding of the issues, concerns, and needs within the county public school system. Having that clearer understanding or awareness will permit the County Executive to make sounder, more informed decisions and, thereby better support county parents, students, staff, and faculty when approving the budget for the Baltimore County Public School System. Senate Bill 414 also codifies the democratic principle of Majority Rule, which enhances the effectiveness of Committees, groups, and boards. Senate Bill 414 provides that the chair and vice chair of the Baltimore County School Board will be elected by the board members currently serving and present, rather than determining the majority on the basis of the number of persons constituting the board. It eliminates the continuance in office of a chair or vice chair who is not running for said office. In closing, I thank Senator Charles Sydnor III, for his leadership and vision as the lead sponsor of Senate Bill 414. I urge this committee to report Senate Bill 414 favorably.