

BILL: Senate Bill 237
TITLE: Education - Curriculum - Unit of Instruction on September 11, 2001, Terrorist Attacks
DATE: February 3, 2022
POSITION: OPPOSE
COMMITTEE: Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs
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The Maryland Association of Boards of Education (MABE) opposes Senate Bill 237, which would mandate that Maryland schools include in the curriculum a unit of instruction on the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks.

MABE generally opposes efforts by the General Assembly to legislate curriculum, including the content standards on which curriculum is based, firmly believing that this role belongs to local boards of education in conjunction with the State Board. Therefore, MABE's opposition to this bill does not rest on an evaluation of the merits of teaching any specified subject matter, but rather opposition to statutorily mandating revisions to content standards and curriculum.

In creating the State Board and local boards of education, the General Assembly has delegated to them the responsibility for reviewing and adopting content standards and, at the local level, reviewing and adopting curriculum. The State Board establishes State content frameworks, state assessment standards, and minimum state graduation requirements. Each local board and school system implement locally-developed curriculum to ensure that the state content frameworks are followed, student performance standards are met, and students are prepared to meet graduation requirements.

In the context of the content standards and unit of instruction proposed by Senate Bill 237, MABE notes that, for example, the Maryland State Standards for Social Studies in Grade 10 includes the standard to: "Evaluate United States policies and actions in response to international terrorism, such as the attack on the Marine barracks in Beirut (1983), Embassy bombings (2000), the attacks on the U.S.S. Cole (2000), and September 11, 2001."

For these reasons, MABE requests and unfavorable report on Senate Bill 237.