

AFSCME Council 67-FAV-SB422.pdf

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Position: FAV



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**SB422 – Education – Jobs That Require Driving Requirements
(CD Education for Good Jobs Act of 2022)
Education, Health and Environmental Affairs
February 9th, 2022**

SUPPORT

AFSCME Council 67 representing counties and cities across Maryland thanks you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of SB 422 – Education- Good Jobs Act of 2022.

This bill requires the Career and Technical Education (CTE) Committee to establish, by December 31, 2022, a statewide CTE pathway for high school students to prepare for a career that requires driving skills and a driver’s license and that leads to the student achieving the required license. The CTE Committee must also establish an annual goal for the number of students who obtain the appropriate driver’s license before they graduate from high school. The bill also authorizes a local school board to allow an employee of the board, or an employee of a person that contracts with the board, to transport a public-school student in a vehicle if the driver is at least 19 years and 6 months old and has at least three years of experience driving a vehicle.

As school districts across the country returned to in-person learning and COVID continues to have an impact on education in general and school transportation scheduling and logistics in particular, the shortage of school bus drivers has become visible. This is not a new problem but a problem that has been highlighted due to COVID. Drivers have been overworked and underpaid causing more and more men and women to leave the job which is not good for Maryland’s student who depend on transportation to school. Legislation such as SB 422 may not be the full answer to the bus driver shortage, but it would be a start to addressing the much-needed solution to a growing issue within our school districts.

In addition to dealing with the short-term issue, Maryland needs to address the long-term issue of school bus driver issues within our school district. Our members have endured for years these shortages, but if we don’t come to a solution, we fear more drivers leave the profession.

We ask for a favorable report on SB 422.

SB 422_TAM_fav.pdf

Uploaded by: John Duklewski

Position: FAV



Bill: Senate Bill 422: Education – Jobs That Require Driving – Requirements (Drivers Education for Good Jobs Act of 2022)

Position: SUPPORT

Dear Chairman Pinsky, Vice-Chair Kagan, and Members of the Committee:

The Transportation Association of Maryland is a 501(c)(3) organization representing 104+ member organizations consisting of locally operated transit agencies (LOTS), non-profit transit providers, transportation vendor and transportation supporters with 20,000+ individual members. TAM is the legislative voice and vigilant eyes and ears of the transportation industry in Maryland. TAM's mission is to strengthen community transportation in Maryland through advocacy and professional development.

Our members are struggling to find enough bus drivers to provide the full level of service that allows their customers to access jobs, health care, and the full life of the communities in which they live. Transit agencies across Maryland are dropping routes and cutting services, which can threaten more than just a commute. A driver shortage only compounds the broader labor shortage, as those who don't necessarily ride on transit every day depend on workers who do. The more transit service is cut, the tougher it is for many essential workers.

We fully support Senate Bill 422's efforts to establish a statewide career and technical education pathway to assist potential drivers in securing commercial drivers licenses' and urge a favorable vote.

Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact John Duklewski at 410-553-4245 or jduklewski@taminc.org.

Sincerely,

John Duklewski
Executive Director, Transportation Association of Maryland

SB422 - Maryland Motor Truck Association - Support

Uploaded by: Louis Campion

Position: FAV



Maryland Motor Truck Association

9256 Bendix Road, Suite 203, Columbia, MD 21045
Phone: 410-644-4600 Fax: 410-644-2537



HEARING DATE: February 9, 2022

BILL NO/TITLE: **Senate Bill 422 – Education – Jobs That Require Driving – Requirements (Drivers Education for Good Jobs Act of 2022)**

COMMITTEE: Senate Education, Health and Environmental Affairs

POSITION: **Support**

Maryland Motor Truck Association wholeheartedly offers its support for SB422, which would require the creation of a statewide career and technical education pathway for high school students to prepare for a career that requires driving skills and a driver's license.

The trucking industry is suffering from a massive labor shortage of drivers. National data released in late 2021 from the American Trucking Associations indicated the current shortfall is over 80,000 drivers. Projections indicate that shortage will reach 100,000 by 2023. A recent survey of 22 companies on MMTA's Board of Directors indicated a need for 650 drivers immediately – an average of 30 per company. Virtually every company that operates commercial trucks needs more drivers.

The lack of drivers has impaired an already fragile supply chain. Maryland's transportation system is the backbone of its commercial activity, with trucks providing the integral link for the state's rail system, the Thurgood Marshall BWI Airport, and the Port of Baltimore. Trucks are the hub of Maryland's distribution wheel, playing a vital role in the state's economic development as they safely and efficiently support the state's manufacturing, agricultural, and retail industries. Over 92 percent of Maryland's communities are served exclusively by truck, meaning that is the only way they get their goods. Without truck drivers, America's economy stops.

For many years, attracting younger drivers to the trucking industry was nearly impossible due to Federal age limits preventing 18-to-20 year-olds from hauling interstate freight. While all 50 states allow 18-year-olds to obtain a commercial driver's license, the Federal ban meant an 18-year-old adult could drive from Sacramento, California to San Diego, California (547 miles) or El Paso, Texas to Houston, Texas (744 miles) without issue, but could not drive along I-81 from Hagerstown, Maryland to Chambersburg, Pennsylvania (23 miles). This is extremely problematic for smaller states, or those whose major population centers and commerce routes are near the state's borders. However, the recent passage of the Federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act includes a pilot program to allow 3,000 younger adult drivers between ages 18 to 20 with a CDL to cross state lines after receiving additional training and if using vehicles equipped with extra safety technologies.

Williamsport High School is on the verge of becoming the first program in Maryland to enroll seniors in courses that will prepare them to take a commercial learners permit test. These students can then feed directly into the CDL training program at Hagerstown Community College. This should be occurring in counties across the state. The path to the middle class is changing. Many trucking companies had as many as three pay increases last year and a six-figure income is possible. There are vital industries in today's economy that offer opportunities for steady, good-paying jobs without the financial burden of a college degree. Trucking is one of those. MMTA believes the passage of SB422 will help promote driving as a career and encourage the Committee to offer a favorable report.

About Maryland Motor Truck Association: Maryland Motor Truck Association is a non-profit trade association representing the trucking industry since 1935. In service to its 1,000 members, MMTA is committed to supporting and advocating for a safe, efficient, and profitable trucking industry across all sectors and industry types, regardless of size, domicile, or type of operation.

For further information, contact: Louis Campion, (c) 443-623-4223

SB422_MRA_FAV.pdf

Uploaded by: Sarah Price

Position: FAV

MARYLAND RETAILERS ASSOCIATION

The Voice of Retailing in Maryland



**SB422 – Education – Jobs That Require Driving – Requirements (Drivers
Education for Good Jobs Act of 2022)
Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee
February 9, 2022**

Position: Favorable

Background: SB422 would provide additional educational pathways for students to prepare for a career as a driver.

Comments: The Maryland Retailers Association (MRA) strongly supports the proposal in SB422 to provide additional educational pathways for students.

MRA understands that a traditional college education is not the goal for all students, and we believe that it is highly important to invest in education options for trades and other nontraditional pathways. SB422 will provide more job opportunities for Marylanders entering the workforce and will result in safer road conditions by setting a baseline for training for these licensed positions. Additionally, our economy is still being impacted by labor shortages and global shipping delays, and trained drivers are a necessity. Providing students in Maryland with additional educational opportunities involving transportation will have a positive impact on our communities, education systems, and all business industries.

With this in mind, we would urge a favorable report on the Drivers Education for Good Jobs Act of 2022. Thank you for your consideration.

2022 Testimony Senate Bill 422 Senator Rosapepe Dr

Uploaded by: Travis Simon

Position: FAV



**Favorable Written Testimony
February 9, 2022
Education, Health, and
Environmental Affairs Committee
Service Employees International Union Local 500**

SUPPORT FOR SENATE BILL 422

Our union represents the support staff at the Montgomery County Public School system, Family Child Care Providers, faculty at institutions of higher education, staff at non-profits and many other working people across the region. Our union is proud to represent over 1,400 staff who work in the transportation department of MCPS as bus drivers, bus attendants and bus route supervisors.

We are writing in support of SB 422 because our staff members need help! We also would say a special thank you to Senator Rosapepe for taking leadership on this issue at a crisis moment. There is a shortage of qualified bus drivers and that is harming our kids' ability to get to school as well as creating stress for our current bus drivers and bus route supervisors. Our county and our state are in desperate need for more truck, school and municipal bus and equipment drivers. This bill is an important step in meeting that need.

The bill would create a high school career and technical education pathway for Maryland students to earn their commercial driver's licenses shortly after turning 18. It would also allow a local school system to hire school bus drivers if they are 19 and half years old and have three years of driving experience. These are important jobs that serve our community and create family supporting jobs for many young Marylanders.

It's not often that bills come before a committee that are truly win-win but this is one of them. It provides a valuable community service, good jobs and is an investment in young professionals and their families. We urge you to help relieve the stress on current bus drivers and lift up future transportation professionals by supporting this bill.

We ask for your support for SB 422 and strongly urge a favorable committee report.

**Service Employees International Union Local 500
901 Russell Avenue, Gaithersburg, MD, 20879
301-740-7100 www.seiu500.org
Pia Morrison, President**

SB 422.Drivers Education for Good Jobs Act.pdf

Uploaded by: John Woolums

Position: FWA

BILL: Senate Bill 422
TITLE: Education – Jobs That Require Driving – Requirements (Drivers Education for Good Jobs Act of 2022)
DATE: February 9, 2022
POSITION: SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENTS
COMMITTEE: Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs
CONTACT: John R. Woolums, Esq.

The Maryland Association of Boards of Education (MABE) supports Senate Bill 422 to expedite the establishment of a statewide program to provide career and technical education (CTE) for students choosing to pursue careers as drivers of commercial vehicles, including school buses. MABE appreciates that this bill would authorize each local school system to determine whether to allow individuals who have completed the pertinent training and certification and who are at least 19 and a half years of age to be hired as school bus drivers. These are extraordinary times regarding the critical shortages of all categories of school employees, and this is an extraordinary legislative initiative to open an avenue for students, school systems, and bus contractors to fill much needed school bus driver positions.

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to have serious consequences for public school systems across the nation and in Maryland. A priority among the many challenges facing school systems is the critical need to recruit and retain qualified school bus drivers. To be clear, local school systems in accordance with state law and regulations place a high priority on assuring the qualifications of school bus drivers. These go beyond the commercial driver’s license (CDL) requirements to include pre-service and in-service training, criminal history standards, and alcohol and controlled substances testing (COMAR 13A.06.07). However, such standards unavoidably create additional barriers to otherwise qualified CDL drivers. More importantly, qualified CDL drivers and certified bus drivers are generally benefitting from the highly competitive compensation offered by other employers. Again, MABE supports a multifaceted approach to addressing these school bus driver issues while maintaining high driver qualification standards which we firmly believe are in the best interests of students and drivers.

In Maryland, school systems typically have a blend of owned buses driven by school system employees and contracted buses driven by the employees of those contractors. For contractors and school systems alike, qualified bus drivers are in limited supply, and many drivers are raising concerns about health, safety, student behavior, and compensation issues. Local school systems, in partnership with local governments, are taking steps to address these concerns. MABE greatly appreciates the efforts of local governments to provide additional funding and the State efforts to recruit CDL drivers to apply for bus driver jobs.

MABE represents 24 local boards of education with a unified commitment to ensuring student safety in all school-related activities, and especially school bus safety. School bus safety involves a wide array of activities: bus driver training, providing safe bus stops, maximizing student safety through the use of security cameras on buses, enforcing traffic laws for reckless drivers who illegally pass buses, and the design and construction standards of the buses themselves. In these ways local school systems, bus contractors, and local law enforcement agencies work to ensure the safest possible transport of students to and from school.

State regulations provide that each local school system is responsible for the safe operation of their student transportation system, must comply with all state procedures and guidelines, and may adopt policies and procedures which exceed the state's minimum requirements (COMAR 13A.06.07.03). With regard to local administration and operation of the student transportation system, state regulations require that each local system employ a local supervisor of student transportation, and prescribe numerous operational and reporting requirements for the hiring of school vehicle driving instructors, employment qualifications for bus drivers, bus inspections, and routing and scheduling.

State law authorizes the State Board to "adopt rules and regulations that provide for the safe operation of the student transportation system of each county board of education." Pursuant to Section 5-205, the State Board has adopted regulations under COMAR 13A.06.07. The State Board's regulations incorporate by reference several federal regulations regarding bus driver qualifications, as well as cross-referencing numerous provisions of Maryland transportation laws and regulations regarding school vehicles and drivers. The Transportation Article also includes provisions regarding school buses, including definitions, operating standards, and driver qualifications (e.g. Md. Code Ann., Transp. Art. § 11-173, school vehicle definitions; § 16-816, bus driver qualifications; and § 21-1118, bus driver responsibilities).

MABE believes that Maryland's regimen of student transportation standards reflects the State's strong interest in ensuring student safety and the federal government's corresponding regulation of commercial transportation including school vehicles. On the local level, school systems must not only comply with all state and federal safety requirements, but also adopt bus routes, stops, loading zones, and schedules. In this way student transportation presents local school systems with myriad, daily operational challenges.

Regarding Senate Bill 422, MABE is concerned with the very prescriptive nature of the mandated career pathway to be established by the new CTE Committee established by the Blueprint for Maryland's Future Act. Specifically, MABE requests the removal of the of the last provision of the bill which requires annual goals for the numbers of students obtaining a CDL and bus driver's certification before graduating from high school.

For these reasons, MABE requests a favorable report on Senate Bill 422 with the amendments described above.