

HB 1291  
SUPPORT

Members of the HGO Committee,

Thank you for your time and consideration of this testimony in support of HB 1291. Yet another piece of legislation that shouldn't be needed but desperately is, HB 1291 will ensure that the process of adding required school immunizations remains with the Maryland Department of Health, in cooperation with the State Board and the Statewide Advisory Commission on Immunizations. This is where school immunization requirements have the potential to receive the *most* amount of thought and consideration.

Having school systems add requirements individually and independently is inappropriate, reckless, and not supported by evidence. As an Anne Arundel County resident, I was absolutely horrified when the County Health Officer suggested in October that the AACO BOE consider adding a Covid-19 vaccine requirement for all students, stating: "...That's typically handled at state level but as I'm reminded these are unprecedented times. We're having to stretch and explore the boundaries of what we normally do." It was not only not data supported, it was also an acknowledged overstep of the BOE's scope. This should be statutorily clarified to avoid future similar situations. I urge the committee to act accordingly and move HB 1291 forward.

Respectfully,

Jenna Butler  
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