



House Bill 1124

Primary and Secondary Education - Local School Systems - Budget Reporting

MACo Position: **SUPPORT**

To: Ways and Means Committee

Date: March 9, 2022

From: Brianna January

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **SUPPORTS** HB 1124. This bill would require local boards of education to report all expenditures to the Blueprint Accountability and Implementation Board (AIB) twice a year and would empower the AIB to share that reporting with local governments should they request it.

This bill would improve transparency in Maryland's public education funding and expenditures, for which counties have long advocated. Counties especially welcome the increased transparency offered by HB 1124 as the State and its local education jurisdictions embark on implementing the landmark reforms of the Blueprint for Maryland's Future and work to provide its accompanying escalation of local funding. In addition, the transparency encouraged in HB 1124 is timely as the State and its school systems continue to receive and manage a substantial influx of federal pandemic recovery funds to support public education.

While not specified in the reporting requirements of HB 1124, counties also encourage the AIB to collect and study the 12 categories of school expenditures that local boards of education currently report to county governments to inform the AIB's work and to provide greater context for the data the Board would receive should this bill become law.

Counties applaud HB 1124's efforts to increase transparency in local spending in Maryland's public systems of education, which counties feel is critical as the State begins implementing Blueprint reform and the accompanying escalation of school funding. For these reasons, MACo **SUPPORTS** HB 1124 and urges a **FAVORABLE** report.