



Policy Foundation of Maryland

Committee: Ways and Means

Testimony on: [SB0908-Harford County Board of Education - Appointment of Members - Alterations](#)

SPONSOR: Harford County Senators

Organization: Policy Foundation of Maryland, MD Legislative Coalition

Person Submitting: Sarahia Benn (Executive Dir.)

Position: UNFavorable

Hearing Date: March 31, 2022

Chairperson and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for allowing testimony today in opposition of SB0908. Policy Foundation of Maryland is a grassroots organization focused on State and County level legislation and policies that impacts Black, Brown, marginalized, low income communities and veterans affairs. Educational legislation is of massive importance to these communities particularly due to how impacted these communities have been historically and currently. Progressive Harford County aims to bring racial, social, economic and environmental justice to Harford County, Maryland. Dion Guthrie, former County Councilman of District A, Harford County and Union leader.

SB0908's purpose is to suppress the voices of Harford Countians by altering who can appoint Board of Education members from an outside impartial executive who's every move would be in the public's eye to a local more partisan member that in no way could be held accountable in Harford County's current political arena where there is a lack of journalistic and media to hold our local officials accountable for any moves they would make. This is a complete conflict of interest and is borderline unConstitutional by marginalizing citizens in Harford County through policy for political expediency.

Part of having appointments is to represent true diversity and inclusion. What this bill does is state it in its language but then does the complete opposite in action. It marginalizes the many voices all over Harford County and in particular Southern Harford portion where a major and predominant portion of the revenues, population, and unfortunately industrialization of the

area have grown but the voices continue to be marginalized through policy from the State and local levels in Harford. Much like a series of other bills in this session from the Harford Delegation, it would reflect the imbalance of the current County Council which is not representative of citizenry voices of Harford County at all. It asks that insiders have disproportionate power to pick more insiders to represent on the Board of Education. This bill clearly is an assault on those who are marginalized and the very People the appointed members of the Board of Education are supposed to represent, many of which are located in Southern Harford

SB0908 in 2022 is nothing short of regressive and biased Board of Education policy setting Harford County on a course backwards not forwards. This further proves the need for diversity and REAL inclusion in representation in public offices as well when policy is written as well. The fact the current County Executive helped to create the current structure of the Board of Education to address the needs of our community and to see as a result it has started moving this area forward and now to witness these unnecessary policy attacks to marginalize the citizens of Harford is yet a reminder that population and demographics changes continue the mass marginalization in policy in biased forms that do not represent all the citizens of Harford.

For these reasons, I urge an **UNFAVORABLE REPORT** on **SB0908**.

Respectfully submitted,



Sarahia Benn
(Policy Foundation of Maryland, Maryland Legislative Coalition)

Additional organizational sign ons:

Dion F. Guthrie
(Business Manager/President Local 1501)

Zack Frink
(Progressive Harford)

Voices Maryland Legislative Department

Denise Perry
Resident of District 34

(Dedicated to Black History month)

“The new dawn blooms as we free it, for there is always light if only we’re brave enough to see it, if only we are brave enough to be it.”

[Amanda Gorman](#)

