

MARYLAND STUDENT COALITION

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TESTIMONY

BILL: House Bill (HB) 47 - Public Schools – Expanded American History –
Development of Content Standards and Implementation

SPONSOR: Delegate Wilson, *Charles County (28)*

POSITION: **FAVORABLE**

Monday, January 17, 2022

HB 47: Favorable

The Maryland Student Coalition is an entirely student-led, advocacy group that serves to bring students together to promote education policy reform. Founded in 2020 as a vehicle for advocating for students' right to demonstrate, our scope has since expanded to include more educational advocacy initiatives. You can learn more at marylandstudents.org

Chair Atterbeary, Vice Chair Washington, and honorable members of the Ways and Means Committee.
We are writing in favor of House Bill 47.

House Bill (HB) 47, Public Schools – Expanded American History – Development of Content Standards and Implementation, will require the Maryland State Department of Education to create content standards to expand representation of BIPOC perspectives and contributions to history.

Nationwide there have been cries by students, of all backgrounds, for increasingly diversified curricula in public education. While some counties in Maryland could be deemed more progressive, there are others that remain stagnant on the topic of curriculum reform and diversification. As a select few counties incorporate diversified curricula in the form of African American History courses, others take little to no action in the same direction. Although this fact is entrenched in political and social views, the issue of the education of Maryland's students is not a political one. The application of such curriculum reform cannot be an inconsistent patchwork as it is now; rather students should be exposed to a breadth of perspectives and authorial backgrounds irrespective of what district they reside in. Quality diverse education cannot become a commodity accessible to the few.

The Maryland Student Coalition strongly supports the diversification of school curriculum and has been pushing for similar legislation this session. Senate Bill 116, will direct MSDE to diversify ELA curriculum for grades 6 through 12. MSC will be testifying on that legislation when it is given a hearing date.

To further the quality of a Maryland public school education, it is of the utmost importance that social studies curricula be diversified in a standardized and consistent manner. Thus, it is to this end that we, Maryland Student Coalition, support the principles within the legislation and strongly encourage issuing a **favorable** report on HB 47.