House Bill 1211

Education - Compensatory Education - Maryland Neighborhood Tier System Calculation

MACo Position: **SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENTS**

To: Appropriations Committee

Date: March 14, 2023

From: Brianna January

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **SUPPORTS** HB 1211 **WITH AMENDMENTS**. The bill as drafted would create an alternative tier-based calculation to determine compensatory education. MACo supports amendments framing this potentially costly mandate on school systems and county governments to be supported by state funds, if enacted.

Currently, counties are (by a wealth-based cost-sharing formula) subject to providing a local share to fund compensatory education. The Blueprint for Maryland's Future legislation, and the Kirwan Commission report on which the legislation was based, both identified challenges in the way compensatory education is calculated.

Counties understand the intent of the bill and the general argument for a revised or secondary calculation. However, the local impact of utilizing this new methodology remains unclear, as its details have not been fully reported, and the bill lays out only a framework for establishing the tiers, with the actual calculations and fiscal effects unknowable. HB 1211 would potentially place a costly mandate on school systems and county governments subject to this new calculation – even as the State-mandated costs on county governments to fund the local share of the ambitious plan are challenging county bottom lines.

Were the Committee to agree to updating the way in which Maryland calculates compensatory education, counties believe the bill should ensure that the State pays the full share of the additional funding accompanying this policy change. Without State support, counties would absorb another required level of funding on top of the already daunting costs of the core Blueprint plan.

Accordingly, MACo urges a report of **FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS** for HB 1211 to provide State funding to support any change in State policy from this or similar proposals.