

Testimony in Support with Amendments to Senate Bill 841 Local School Systems - Student Field Trips - Funding

Senate Budget and Taxation Committee
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The Maryland State Education Association supports, with an amendment, Senate Bill 841. This bill would require the Governor to include an appropriation in the annual budget bill of \$500,000 for the State Department of Education to provide grants to local school systems for expenses related to student field trips to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, the National Museum of African American History and Culture, the Jewish Museum of Maryland, and the Reginald F. Lewis Museum of Maryland African American History and Culture.

MSEA represents 75,000 educators and school employees who work in Maryland's public schools, teaching and preparing our almost 900,000 students for the careers and jobs of the future. MSEA also represents 39 local affiliates in every county across the state of Maryland, and our parent affiliate is the 3-million-member National Education Association (NEA).

Engaging students with hands-on activities like field trips is among educators' most valuable tools to deepen students' understanding and promote critical thinking. This legislation would provide crucial resources to support such trips, with an emphasis on furthering students' knowledge of the history, contributions, and experiences of Black and Jewish communities in Maryland, the U.S., and the world.

The museums listed here are excellent options. There may be other high-quality, historically accurate, and culturally relevant museums that will support students' learning, and that are more geographically accessible to students in Western Maryland or Eastern Shore counties. We therefore propose an amendment to add to the list of permissible field trips: **"Another museum or historical site that is focused**



on the history and culture of underrepresented communities and that is approved by the State Board of Education.” This will allow for the opportunity to consider other field trip destinations, where appropriate, while ensuring their quality and relevance.

We urge the committee to issue a favorable report, with the amendment included here, on Senate Bill 841.