



**Olivia Bartlett, DoTheMostGood Maryland Team**

**Committee:** Budget and Taxation

**Testimony on:** SB0841 - Local School Systems - Student Field Trips - Funding

**Position:** Favorable with Amendments

**Hearing Date:** March 7, 2023

**Bill Contact:** Senator Benjamin F. Kramer

DoTheMostGood (DTMG) is a progressive grass-roots organization with members in all districts in Montgomery County as well as in nearby jurisdictions. DTMG supports legislation and activities that keep all Maryland residents healthy and safe in a clean environment, uplift all members of our communities, and promote equity across all our communities. DTMG strongly supported and advocated for the enactment of the Blueprint for Maryland's Future and considers effective legislative funding of and oversight over the implementation of the Blueprint and enactment of other legislation to enhance public education to be among the legislature's highest priorities.

We applaud and support the provisions in SB0841 to provide funding for field trips to four museums— The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, the National Museum of African American History and Culture, the Jewish Museum of Maryland, and the Reginal F. Lewis Museum of Maryland African American History and Culture. Trips to these museums will provide needed education about important groups and events in Maryland and American history and culture.

However, the proposed appropriation of \$500,000 should be enlarged to also cover the cost of field trips to other important institutions and museums, such as the National Zoo, the National Aquarium, and the major museums in Baltimore and on the National Mall.

Members of DTMG have served as Montgomery County teachers and classroom volunteers. The volunteers in public schools serving less affluent communities in Montgomery County have concluded that many of the elementary school students in these schools have significant interest in animals, dinosaurs, space travel, and many other areas, yet have rarely, if ever, been to the National Zoo, Natural History Museum, the Space Museum, and other museums on the National Mall. In discussion with elected officials in Montgomery County, the value of such field trips are recognized, but they cannot be done because of funding limitations or the lack of available buses and drivers.

As Maryland and its newly elected Governor strive to address educational inequities as a top priority, substantially increasing the number of field trips, now that Covid-19 appears to be of much lesser concern, would result in substantial benefits at a relatively small cost. Therefore, DTMG strongly supports SB0841 with amendments and urges a **FAVORABLE** report on this bill.

Respectfully submitted,

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