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Appropriations Committee

Subcommittees

Capital Budget

Oversight Committee on Personnel

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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

HB 448: Nonpublic Education - Placements of Children With Disabilities - Teacher Salaries
(Teacher Pay Parity Act)

Testimony of Delegate Marc Korman—Favorable with Amendments

Thank you Mr. Chair, Mr. Vice Chair members of the Budget and Taxation Committee. I come before you today to present the **Teacher Pay Parity Act (HB 448)**. The Teacher Pay Parity Act requires over a phase-in period that the State and counties provide teachers at special education placement programs a salary that is equivalent to salaries received by traditional public school teachers. The program is for public school funded students who are placed in a non-public facility to better meet their unique educational needs. HB 448 is the cross-file of Senator Zucker's SB 311, which this committee has already heard.

As you may be aware, the state of Maryland is responsible for providing Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) for all students, including those with special needs. This commitment is met through the development of the Individualized Education Program (IEP), which is designed to meet the unique needs of a student with disabilities. However, if an IEP team finds that a student's local public school is unable to fully implement the student's IEP, the student may be recommended to be placed in a nonpublic school that is able to serve their needs. These students are publicly funded.

The bill addresses the pay disparity between nonpublic special education teachers and public school special education teachers, which ranges from 23.3% to 40.7% below public school system rates. The disparity only increases when accounting for qualifications and advanced degrees. The salary disparity for a Master's maximum through Doctorate maximum range between 36.8% and 40.7% below public school system rates. That means that a teacher in a classroom at a local public elementary school may be making significantly more than a teacher at a local special needs elementary school, even if all the students in both classrooms are publicly funded. The bill ensures that special education teachers are paid more comparable rates to public school teachers in their county to increase teacher retention. The state of Maryland—led by this committee—has done one-time increases of approximately \$4 million the past two years but this would be a permanent change. The bill as amended would phase in funding increases over three years to achieve 100% salary parity by fiscal year 2027.

The bill as amended passed the House with overwhelming bipartisan support and is also supported by the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE). The Ways & Means committee made a few changes to the language regarding how the pay parity would be calculated

within the nonpublic school's budget process. We are working with Senator Zucker and MSDE on amendments for your consideration which will ensure that these changes do not negatively impact the budget process.

Special education schools are vital to the fulfillment of the Individuals with Disabilities Act and state law. Special needs students deserve the best education possible and in order to provide that we must make sure teachers working with special education placements are paid competitive salaries. The Teacher Pay Parity Act helps bridge the gap in salary between special education placement teachers and their public school counterparts. It is important that we strive to provide equitable salaries for special education placement teachers to encourage and support the vital work they do. I urge a favorable report.

Below is a summary of a teacher salary parity study conducted by the Maryland Association of Nonpublic Special Education Facilities (MANSEF).

Maryland Summary				
# of Schools In Response	# of Schools with Salary Disparity	Total Salary Differential*	Total Teacher FTEs*	Average Salary Difference per FTE*
77	67	\$12,734,212.93	787.46	\$16,171.25
Garrett/ Allegany/ Washington				
# of Schools In Response	# of Schools with Salary Disparity	Total Salary Differential*	Total Teacher FTEs*	Average Salary Difference per FTE*
4	4	\$408,330.14	26	\$15,705.01
Frederick/ Carroll/ Howard				
# of Schools In Response	# of Schools with Salary Disparity	Total Salary Differential*	Total Teacher FTEs*	Average Salary Difference per FTE*
5	5	\$991,543.45	72.05	\$13,761.88
Montgomery				
# of Schools In Response	# of Schools with Salary Disparity	Total Salary Differential*	Total Teacher FTEs*	Average Salary Difference per FTE*
20	20	\$4,230,482.30	212.1	\$19,945.70
Anne Arundel				
# of Schools In Response	# of Schools with Salary Disparity	Total Salary Differential*	Total Teacher FTEs*	Average Salary Difference per FTE*
7	3	\$375,247.00	26.5	\$14,160.26
Prince George's				
# of Schools In Response	# of Schools with Salary Disparity	Total Salary Differential*	Total Teacher FTEs*	Average Salary Difference per FTE*
10	6	\$1,823,014.60	73.1	\$24,938.64
Baltimore County				
# of Schools In Response	# of Schools with Salary Disparity	Total Salary Differential*	Total Teacher FTEs*	Average Salary Difference per FTE*
17	15	\$2,392,561.04	176.51	\$13,554.82
Baltimore City				
# of Schools In Response	# of Schools with Salary Disparity	Total Salary Differential*	Total Teacher FTEs*	Average Salary Difference per FTE*
9	9	\$2,067,428.40	159.2	\$12,986.36
Harford/ Cecil/ Caroline				
# of Schools In Response	# of Schools with Salary Disparity	Total Salary Differential*	Total Teacher FTEs*	Average Salary Difference per FTE*
5	5	\$445,606.00	42	\$10,609.67

* only schools with salary disparity have data included in these columns