

SB402 Kent County Senate Delegation Support.pdf

Uploaded by: Daniel Granzow

Position: FAV

STEPHEN S. HERSHEY, JR.
Legislative District 36
Caroline, Cecil, Kent, and
Queen Anne's Counties

—
MINORITY LEADER
—

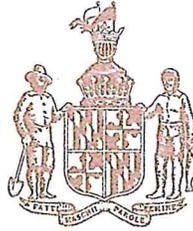
Finance Committee

Executive Nominations Committee

Rules Committee
—

Joint Committee on Legislative Ethics

Legislative Policy Committee



James Senate Office Building
11 Bladen Street, Room 423
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
410-841-3639 · 301-858-3639
800-492-7122 Ext. 3639
Fax 410-841-3762 · 301-858-3762
Steve.Hershey@senate.state.md.us

THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

February 22, 2023

The Honorable Brian J. Feldman
Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
2 West
Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Dear Chairman Feldman,

The Kent County Senate Delegation supports Senate Bill 402 Kent County – Board of Education – Student Member. I thank you for your committee's consideration of this bill and request a favorable report.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "S. Hershey", written over a horizontal line.

Senator Stephen S. Hershey, Jr. - Chair

SB402 Testimony.pdf

Uploaded by: Daniel Granzow

Position: FAV

STEPHEN S. HERSHEY, JR.
Legislative District 36
Caroline, Cecil, Kent, and
Queen Anne's Counties

MINORITY LEADER

Finance Committee

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February 28, 2023

The Honorable Brian J. Feldman
Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
2 West Miller Senate Office Building
Senate Bill 402 – Kent County – Board of Education – Student Member

Dear Chairman and Members of the Committee:

Senate Bill 402 codifies a nonvoting member of the Kent County Board of Education into statute and specifies the selection method and responsibilities of the student member. The student will serve a one-year term that begins on July 1, 2024. The student must be a resident of Kent County, a junior or senior at Kent County High School and will be elected by the high school students at Kent County High School.

There is a technical amendment in file to match Senate Bill 402 to its cross-file, House Bill 402.

Senate Bill 402 is supported by the Kent County Commissioners, the Kent County Board of Education, and the Kent County Delegation. I ask for a favorable consideration.

02.10.23 Brian Feldman, Support Letter SB402, HB40

Uploaded by: Tonya Thomas

Position: FAV



The County Commissioners of Kent County
Ronald H. Fithian, President | Albert H. Nickerson, Member | John F. Price, Member
Shelley L. Heller, County Administrator | Thomas N. Yeager, County Attorney

February 10, 2023

The Honorable Brian J. Feldman
2 West, Miller State Building
Annapolis, MD 21401-1912

RE: SUPPORT Senate Bill 402 / House Bill 402 Kent County Board of Education - Student Member

Dear Chair Feldman and Members of the Education, Energy and the Environment Committee:

On behalf of the County Commissioners of Kent County, Maryland, this letter serves as full support for Senate Bill 402 / House Bill 402 Kent County - Board of Education - Student Member. Kent County agrees with the framework to establish student involvement in the Board of Education.

We respectfully submit our full support to SB402/ HB402.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Shelley L. Heller", is written over a horizontal line.

Shelley L. Heller
County Administrator

SLH: tlt

cc: The County Commissioners of Kent County
The Honorable Stephen S. Hershey, Jr.
The Honorable Jay A. Jacobs
The Honorable Steven J. Arentz
The Honorable Jefferson L. Ghrist
Dr. Karen M. Couch, Superintendent, Kent County Public Schools

02.10.23 Stephen Hershey Letter of Support SB402,

Uploaded by: Tonya Thomas

Position: FAV



The County Commissioners of Kent County
Ronald H. Fithian, President | Albert H. Nickerson, Member | John F. Price, Member
Shelley L. Heller, County Administrator | Thomas N. Yeager, County Attorney

February 10, 2023

The Honorable Stephen S. Hershey, Jr.
Room 420, James Senate Office Building
11 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: SUPPORT Senate Bill 402 / House Bill 402 Kent County Board of Education - Student Member

Dear Senator Hershey:

On behalf of the County Commissioners of Kent County, Maryland, this letter serves as full support for Senate Bill 402 / House Bill 402 Kent County - Board of Education - Student Member. Kent County agrees with the framework to establish student involvement in the Board of Education.

We respectfully submit our full support to SB402 / HB402.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Shelley L. Heller", is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Shelley L. Heller
County Administrator

SLH: tlt

cc: The County Commissioners of Kent County
The Honorable Jay A. Jacobs
The Honorable Steven J. Arentz
The Honorable Jefferson L. Ghrist
Dr. Karen M. Couch, Superintendent, Kent County Public Schools

Brayden Wallace Testify .pdf

Uploaded by: Brayden Wallace

Position: FWA

My name is Brayden Wallace, and I am the Student Member of the Board for Kent County Public Schools. I am here today to testify in favor of House Bill 402 with an amendment. House Bill 402 proposes to alter the membership of the Kent County Board of Education to include a student member; and provides for the initial term of the student member of the county board to start on July 1. Student members provide insight and a unique perspective of what is happening in schools and therefore should be recognized as members. Legally recognizing the student member has the support of our Superintendent, Dr. Karen Couch, and the members of the Kent County Board of Education.

Currently, MD Education Code 3-801 states that the Kent County Board of Education consists of only five elected voting members. The student member of the board is not legally recognized in MD Education Code 3-801. However, in approximately 2007, the Kent County Board of Education voted to add a student member but this was never codified. Last year's student member, Sam Buckel, requested that this be considered and to amend MD Education Code 3-801 to include the student member as a legal member of the board. Since that time, I have met with Delegate Jacobs to discuss these changes, and the Kent County Board of Education voted on October 13th to present the proposed legislation to Delegate Jacobs. Essentially, I am asking you to vote in favor of a position that already exists in our local policy but simply needs to be added to MD Code 3-801.

As stated in House Bill 402, I also believe firmly that the student member of the board should be allowed into an executive session if invited by an affirmative vote of the majority of the board. I recognize that there may be only a very rare occasion that a student member's attendance is required in one the exceptions for a closed session.

I also urge you to consider an amendment to House Bill 402 to allow for partial voting rights of the Kent County Public Schools Student Member of the Board. Through my research, it appears that currently Anne Arundel's student member has full voting rights and the student members in Baltimore County, Baltimore City, Charles, Harford, Howard, Montgomery, and Prince George's Counties all have partial voting rights. House Bill 402 proposes to add that the student member may advise the county board on the thoughts and feelings of students in Kent County Public Schools. I agree, but I am also requesting the amendment for partial voting rights that would allow the student to vote on all matters except those relating to:

- (i) Geographical attendance areas;
- (ii) Acquisition and disposition of real property and matters pertaining to school construction;
- (iii) Employment of architects;
- (iv) Donations;
- (v) Consolidation of schools and transportation of students;
- (vi) Appointment and salary of a county superintendent;
- (vii) Employee discipline and other appeals;
- (viii) Budgetary matters;
- (ix) Appointment and promotion of staff ;
- (x) Discipline of certificated staff;
- (xi) Collective bargaining for certificated employees;
- (xii) Collective bargaining for noncertificated employees; and
- (xiii) Student suspension and expulsion.

Please keep in mind that many SMOBs, like myself are already 18 years old and able to vote in elections. We also provide valuable insight.....

SB 402- Chair Feldman and EEE Committee.pdf

Uploaded by: Dr. Karen Couch

Position: FWA



Kent County Board of Education

Growing a Community of Leaders

Dr. Karen M. Couch
Office of the Superintendent

February 21, 2023

The Honorable Brian J. Feldman
2 West, Miller State Building
Annapolis, MD 21401-1912

RE: **SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENTS** SB 402/ HB 402 Kent County Board of Education-
Student Member

Dear Chair Feldman and Members of the Education, Energy and the Environment
Committee:

The Kent County Board of Education is seeking to revise the Maryland Education Article to recognize the Student Member as a member of the Board of Education. On behalf of the Kent County Board of Education and the Kent County Public Schools, Kent County, Maryland, this letter provides written testimony as support with amendments for Senate Bill 402/ House Bill 402 Kent County- Board of Education- Student Member.

While we support recognizing the student member as a member of the Board of Education, the amendment makes it clear that the Student Member will not be allowed into closed (executive) session. Under the General Provisions Article 3-305 (b), the board has the statutory authority to close the meeting under fifteen (15) exceptions. In reviewing the exceptions for closing a meeting, the Kent County Board of Education determined, as did our legal counsel, that it would not be appropriate for a student member of the board to be included in any of the confidential discussions as outlined in the fifteen (15) exceptions for closing a meeting.

The Kent County Board of Education and Kent County Board of Education respectfully supports Senate Bill 402 and House Bill 402 as amended. We urge a favorable report.

Respectfully,

Dr. Karen M. Couch
Superintendent

cc: The Honorable Stephen S. Hershey, Jr.
The Honorable Jay A. Jacobs
The Honorable Steven J. Arentz
The Honorable Jefferson L. Ghrist
The Kent County Board of Education

SB0402_fsullivan_Testimony_Favorable.pdf

Uploaded by: Francoise Sullivan

Position: FWA

SB0402 Kent County - Board of Education - Student Member

February 28, 2023

Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENT

Chairperson Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan and Members of the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee,

My name is Francoise Sullivan and I am a member of the Kent County Public Schools Board of Education. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of this legislation with amendment.

Since being elected to the Board of Education in 2020 I have had the pleasure of working with 2 student members of the Board – Sam Buckel and Brayden Wallace. Both students expressed strong feelings about the position and the type of responsibilities that they held. In discussing and researching student member positions in other Maryland school districts we discovered that even though Kent County has had a student member on the board for many years the position was considered ceremonial and had never been formally recognized as a member of the board. This piece of legislation will give our student member of the board the formal recognition they deserve.

The perspective and experience of the student member is a valuable resource for any board of education. Student members are expected to be engaged with their schools and fellow students and to gauge and provide an overview of how students feel about school projects and policies. However, the confidential and legal nature of executive and closed sessions would preclude the need for a student member to participate in those discussions and decisions. I request that the following passage –

“UNLESS INVITED TO ATTEND BY AN AFFIRMATIVE VOTE OF A MAJORITY OF THE COUNTY BOARD, THE STUDENT MEMBER MAY NOT ATTEND AN EXECUTIVE SESSION OF THE COUNTY BOARD.

Be amended to –

“THE STUDENT MEMBER MAY NOT ATTEND AN EXECUTIVE SESSION OF THE COUNTY BOARD.”

I request a favorable report on Senate Bill 0402 with the proposed amendment. Thank you for your time.

Francoise Sullivan
Vice President,
Board of Education
Kent County Public Schools
5608 Boundary Avenue
Rock Hall, MD 21661

JGoetz SB402 Kent County - Support as Amended 23-0

Uploaded by: Joseph Goetz

Position: FWA

February 28, 2023

The Honorable Brian J. Feldman
2 West, Miller State Building
Annapolis, MD 21401-1912

RE: SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENTS SB 402/HB 402 Kent County Board of Education Student Member

Dear Chair Feldman and Members of the Education, Energy and the Environment Committee:

Today the current education article for Kent County does not formally recognize the student member of our Board of Education as a member of the Kent County Board of Education. This amended legislation submitted by Senator Hershey would formally do so.

I support this amended legislation as it allows our system to formalize the position of Student Member of the Board as determined by the Kent County Board of Education. It is important to receive feedback and opinions from our student member as it provides varying views and helpful information regarding various topics. However, in conducting school board business, there are confidential issues and matters that are discussed in closed session. It would not be appropriate for a student to be in these closed sessions and this amendment codifies both elements above.

This letter provides written testimony in support of SB 402/HB 402 Kent County Board of Education Student Member as amended where the student member of the board is recognized but not giving authorization to attend and executive session of the board.

Respectfully,



Joseph Goetz
Kent County Board of Education – Board President

Cc: Education, Energy and the Environment Committee Members
The Honorable Stephen S. Hershey, Jr.
The Honorable Jay A. Jacobs
The Honorable Steven J. Arentz
The Honorable Jefferson L. Ghrist
The Kent County Board of Education
Dr. Karen M. Couch

Supporting SMOB.pdf

Uploaded by: madsion messick

Position: FWA

Good afternoon everyone, I want to thank all of you for this opportunity to speak. My name is Madison Messick, I am a student at Kent County High School. I am here in support of House Bill 402 and altering the membership status of the Student Member of the Board. I am in the second semester of my junior year and have been a part of the Student Government Association my entire high school career. In the last two and half years, I have heard one repeated request and that is to be heard. So when I was asked to testify for this bill, I jumped at the chance to be a voice for those students. Many of us, myself included are wondering, why would this bill be opposed? Plenty of other counties in Maryland allow their Student Member of the Board voting rights, why is Kent County any different? Our county may be small but it is full of passionate individuals. I have watched many of these passionate students be advocates and provide priceless input on major decisions that heavily impact our students. Decisions without those students opinion would negatively alter the school school. The individuals that are elected may be some of the most qualified people that offer opinions on a system they participate in every day. Who knows more about school than a student? Every student deserves a voice in their education and a voting Student Member of the Board will provide that for students. Being able to witness representation that values the student body and relates to our experiences is essential for a successful school system. All we want is to be heard. I urge you to vote in favor of House Bill 402 and create a Voting Student Member of the Kent County Board of Education. Thank you all again for this opportunity and I am here for any questions you may have.

SB402 Kent County - Board of Education - Student M

Uploaded by: Mara Babb

Position: FWA



SB402 Kent County - Board of Education - Student Member

Wednesday, February 19, 2023

EDUCATION, ENERGY, & ENVIRONMENT

SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENTS

Our names are Mara Babb, Subhashi Pradhan, Noor Chaudhry, and Julien Halleman, and we are students of Anne Arundel County and executive team members of the Chesapeake Regional Association of Student Councils (CRASC). We are writing in support of SB402 Kent County - Board of Education - Student Member with certain amendments. If passed, the bill will establish the student member of Kent County and allow all high school students to elect the student member of the Kent County Board of Education. There is already a current Student Member of the Board (SMOB) for Kent County, thus this bill is just a formality to officially establish the SMOB and SMOB elections in legislation.

CRASC respectfully proposes the following amendments to SB402:

- Amend the bill to allow the student member to vote on issues concerning students

As the only district in the nation to have a [Student Member of the Board \(SMOB\)](#) with full voting rights, CRASC strongly supports the student member of the Kent County Board of Education to have full autonomy to act as a representative of the student body. The purpose of the student member as defined by SB402 would be to “Advise the county board on the thoughts and feelings of students.” As students, “advising” cannot be our only purpose and avenue to advocate for our peers effectively. In order for a SMOB to have any influence over policy, they must be given a voice not only through their position but through their vote. Student members are responsible for attending meetings, taking time off school, participating in committees, and representing all students in their district. They have the same expectations as all adult members of the Kent County Board of Education, however they do not have the same opportunity to vote on all issues concerning students like other members, guaranteeing their opinions are seen as equally valuable.

Additionally, this bill will allow all high school students of Kent County the opportunity to vote on a student that will represent their wants and needs, in regards to important county-wide issues. This will allow students to feel involved in local politics and encourage them to be civically engaged in the future. Some may say that students are uneducated voters leading to unqualified student members, however CRASC has been electing our student member with representative delegations every year since 1974. Since that time, we have seen determined leaders that successfully represent the interests of the students. Furthermore, the passing of this bill will still require the elected SMOB candidate to be appointed by the governor, ensuring that the elected student is in good standing to represent the student body.

The CRASC Legislative Department refers back to the following relevant clauses of the CRASC Platform:

- *CRASC Supports...* Opportunities for students to voice opinions on issues that directly affect students; (Plank 1, Clause F)
- *CRASC Supports...* Full voting rights for all Student Members on Boards of Education; (Plank 1, Clause B)
- *CRASC Supports...* Student participation in decision-making processes; (Plank 1, Clause G)
- *CRASC Supports...* A. Election of [each] Student Member of the Board of Education; (Plank 1, Clause A)

Accordingly, CRASC respectfully requests a **FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS** committee report on SB402.

Respectfully Submitted,

Mara Babb, Secretary of Legislation, babbmara@gmail.com

Noor Chaudhry, Legislative Liaison, noorschaudhry@gmail.com

Julien Halleman, Legislative Liaison, julienh123@icloud.com

Subhashi Pradhan, Legislative Liaison, subhashi_pradhan@hotmail.com