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THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

February 22, 2023

SB321
PUBLIC SCHOOLS – LENGTH OF SCHOOL YEAR AND INNOVATIVE SCHOOL
SCHEDULING MODELS – REVISIONS

Good Afternoon Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan and Members of the Education, Energy and Environment Committee;

Thank you for the opportunity to present to you SB321, Public Schools – Length of School Year and Innovative School Scheduling Models – Revisions. SB321 addresses outdated and artificial constraints in the scheduling of the school year for public school students. This bill also encourages school systems to explore the use of innovative school scheduling models.

Currently, State law requires that public schools be open for student attendance for both 180 days and a minimum number of seat hours during a 10-month period. A minimum number of 1,080 student seat hours are required at the elementary and middle school levels, and 1,170 student seat hours are required at the high school level. This bill removes the requirements that public schools be open for student attendance for a minimum of 180 days during a 10-month period, but leaves the minimum number of seat hours required in place.

This change is necessary in order to provide local school systems with the flexibility to tailor instructional programs and school operations to innovatively best meet the needs of their students but does not diminish in any way requirements regarding instruction provided to students.

I want to emphasize that this bill does not mandate that a school system alter current operations in any way and does not reduce instructional time for students. What it does do is provide local school systems which much needed flexibility to better address their needs of their students and families when creating the school calendar.

I respectfully request a favorable report on SB 321.