



TESTIMONY TO THE SENATE EDUCATION, ENERGY, & THE ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

SB 338 Primary and Secondary Education – Extended School Year Innovation Grant

POSITION: Oppose

BY: Nancy Soreng, President

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The League of Women Voters of Maryland (LWVMD) is a nonpartisan organization that works to influence public policy through education and advocacy. LWVMD supports programs and reforms that promote equal access to quality education and is committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion in principle and in practice. However, we oppose SB 338 for a variety of reasons.

SB 338 Primary and Secondary Education – Extended School Year Innovation Grant would establish a grant to develop and implement an extended school year scheduling model in public primary and secondary schools. It would allocate an annual appropriation of \$25,000,000 through FY 2035.

The research does not support the efficacy of an extended school year. Simply having more learning time or days does not necessarily translate into more learning. To reap any potential benefits, an extended school year needs to consider the quality and articulation of activities taking place, related adjustments to school resources (local capacity), as well as which students may benefit from an extended school year, which instructional modality will work best with which students. Simply extending the school year addresses none of these requirements. In addition, this should be a local decision, based on school and student needs. Research suggests that after-school and summer programs, which are opt-in and target specific student needs are more effective than a longer school year.

Most importantly, the Blueprint for Maryland Schools includes support and resources for a Community Schools model. [Strong research](#) supports the positive effect and efficacy of Community Schools on improving student and school outcomes and contributes to meeting the education needs of low-achieving students in low poverty schools. It creates and coordinates a range of services, resources, and opportunities within a public school that enhance student development and learning. The Blueprint is currently underfunded, and the \$25,000,000 allocated for an extended school year should go to support the Blueprint and Community Schools, not introduce another, competing program with a limited research base.

We urge an unfavorable report on SB338.