



Testimony on Senate Bill 271
Education – Maryland Civic Engagement Program – Established
Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
March 1, 2023
Position: Favorable

The Maryland Out of School Time Network (MOST) is a statewide organization dedicated to closing opportunity gaps by expanding both the quantity and quality of afterschool and summer learning opportunities for school-aged young people. MOST is one of the fifty statewide networks supported by the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation and serves as Maryland’s affiliate to the National Afterschool Association.

Students’ civic engagement is a hallmark of positive youth development and should be an intentional part of every young person’s education. According to civxnow.org, civic education, when done well, produces young people who are more likely to vote; work on community issues; become socially responsible; and feel confident speaking publicly and interacting with elected officials.

We applaud Senate Bill 271 for providing a concrete way to recognize student civic engagement achievements and for encouraging schools to proactively create more opportunities for young people to build civic readiness. We are particularly pleased that young people’s experiences outside the school day are included in the “Seal of Civic Engagement.” Young people should get more credit for their extracurricular experiences completed afterschool and during the summer. The seal, included on a student’s transcript and diploma, will certainly be an additional attraction for colleges and universities.

Senate Bill 271 provides a straightforward, easy-to-implement structure for recognizing students and schools that will encourage and support more civic engagement programming. MOST urges the committee to provide a favorable report.

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