



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

SB 522 Education – Accountability and Implementation Board - Membership

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 supported the passage of the Blueprint for Maryland's Future (Blueprint) and continues to monitor and support the implementation of the Blueprint.

LWVMD opposes SB 522 Education – Accountability and Implementation Board – Membership.

This bill would require the AIB to include representatives from various regions of the state and from each of the five counties with the largest student populations. This change is likely to introduce regional and partisan issues into the operation of the AIB and undermine its independence and effectiveness.

The Blueprint for Maryland's Future established the Accountability and Implementation Board (AIB) as an independent unit of State government designed to provide oversight, hold local and state governments accountable for implementation, and evaluate implementation outcomes. Members of the AIB were required to have a **high level of knowledge and expertise** in education policy, teaching, leading and managing systemic change, financial auditing and accounting, and evaluation. Thus, the credibility and independence of the AIB is based on the expertise of its members, not where they live.

Requiring the AIB to include regional representation undermines the requirement that AIB membership is based on expertise. The current law includes provisions that membership reflect—**to the extent practical**—the geographic, racial, ethnic, cultural, and gender diversity of the state, but elevates, as it should be, expertise of members.

We urge an unfavorable report on SB522.