



## Senate Bill 810

### *Maryland Priority Out-of-School Time Program – Alterations*

MACo Position: **SUPPORT**

To: Finance and Budget & Taxation Committees

Date: March 16, 2023

From: Brianna January

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **SUPPORTS** SB 810. This bill would rename the Public School Opportunities Enrichment Program to the Maryland Priority Out-of-School Time Program and significantly increase the State's annual appropriation to the Program from \$3 million to \$8.5 million.

The Public School Opportunities Enrichment Program provides grants to the local school systems, community schools, and nonprofits to offset costs associated with providing out-of-school recreational programs. Counties are strong supporters of these programs and welcome additional State aid to help support them.

These programs provide students and families with safe and enriching opportunities during times when schools are closed, and students are out of classrooms. Importantly, these programs operate during out-of-school hours, like before and after school, on weekends, and during vacation and holiday periods. They specifically target periods of vulnerability when children are outside of the classroom and have few opportunities – times when they are at-risk of engaging in unsafe and harmful activities and behaviors.

The grants provided by the Program give Maryland students the opportunity to participate in a range of enriching activities and programs. SB 810's increased annual appropriation of these grants from \$3 million to \$8.5 million is significant and will allow counties to offer a greater number of these important programs and serve more children. For these reasons, MACo **SUPPORTS** SB 810 and urges a **FAVORABLE** report.