



TESTIMONY TO THE HOUSE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

HB 486 Income Tax – Credit for Student Bus Transportation Expenses

POSITION: Oppose

BY: Nancy Soreng, President

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The League of Women Voters of Maryland (LWVMD) opposes public funding for vouchers or other aid for private and parochial schools. This bill, **HB 486 Income Tax – Credit for Student Bus Transportation Expenses**, is another form of providing state aid for nonpublic education. The state's primary responsibility is to support public school students, regardless of race/ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, language, and physical and academic ability.

The LWVMD strongly opposes HB 486. This bill would allow a parent or guardian who pays a nonpublic school for bus transportation to take up to \$1500 in a refundable tax credit for that expense. The school would be one which participates in the Nonpublic Schools Textbook and Technology Grants Program.

At this time we need to focus on providing funds for public schools and improving and implementing the Blueprint for Maryland's Future. The Covid-19 epidemic requires that we target funds to reduce learning loss among public school students. Also, additional funding will be needed for the Blueprint after FY27, so we should not be requiring a tax expenditure to benefit nonpublic schools.

We urge the committee to give an unfavorable report to **HB 486**.