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MAJORITY LEADER

Appropriations Committee

Subcommittees

Capital Budget

Oversight Committee on Personnel

Chair, Transportation and the
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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Teacher Pay Parity Act (HB 448)
Testimony of Delegate Marc Korman—Favorable

Thank you Madam Chair, Madam Vice Chair, members of the Ways & Means Committee as well as my colleagues visiting from Appropriations. I come before you today to present the **Teacher Pay Parity Act (HB 448)**. The Teacher Pay Parity Act requires the State and counties to provide teachers at special education placement programs a salary that is equivalent to salaries received by traditional public school teachers. The program is for public school funded students who are placed in a non-public facility to better meet their unique educational needs.

As you may be aware, the state of Maryland is responsible for providing Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) for all students, including those with special needs. This commitment is met through the development of the Individualized Education Program (IEP), which is designed to meet the unique needs of a student with disabilities. However, if an IEP team finds that a student's local public school is unable to fully implement the student's IEP, the student may be recommended to be placed in a nonpublic school that is able to serve their needs. These students are publicly funded.

The bill implements three main changes to the program.

Program Name Change

The Teacher Pay Parity Act changes the of the program from “nonpublic placement program” to “special education placement program.” The change more accurately reflects the intent of the program which is to educate students in our public school system who require special education placements to meet unique educational needs. The term “nonpublic” is a misnomer and naturally makes people think about private pay students and private pay schools. For example, the special education placement schools are not part of the BOOST Program. The name change helps distinguish that the special placement schools are for publicly funded students.

Pay Parity

The bill addresses the pay disparity between nonpublic special education teachers and public school special education teachers, which ranges from 23.3% to 40.7% below public school system rates. The disparity only increases when accounting for qualifications and advanced degrees. The salary disparity for a Master’s maximum through Doctorate maximum range

between 36.8% and 40.7% below public school system rates. That means that a teacher in a classroom at a local public elementary school may be making significantly more than a teacher at a local special needs elementary school, even if all the students in both classrooms are publicly funded. The bill ensures that special education teachers are paid more comparable rates to public school teachers in their county to increase teacher retention. The state of Maryland has done one-time increases of approximately \$4 million the past two years but this would be a permanent change.

Cost Sharing

The costs of educating these children are shared by the local jurisdiction and the state. Under existing law, the local jurisdiction pays to the special needs school the local share of a calculated “basic cost” used to determine the cost of educating a non-special needs student plus 200% of the basic cost. If there is a difference between the cost of the school, the budget for which must be approved by the Maryland State Department of Education, and the basic cost—which there typically is—the state pays 70% of that additional cost and the local jurisdiction pays the remaining 30%. The bill restores the historic, pre-Great Recession cost sharing so that the state pays 80% of that cost and the local jurisdiction pays the remaining 20%. The change makes the cost more palatable for the local jurisdiction.

Special education schools are vital to the fulfillment of the Individuals with Disabilities Act and state law. Special needs students deserve the best education possible and in order to provide that we must make sure teachers working in special education placements are paid competitive salaries. The Teacher Pay Parity Act helps bridge the gap in salary between special education placement teachers and their public school counterparts. It is important that we strive to provide equitable salaries for special education placement teachers to encourage and support the vital work they do. I urge a favorable report.

Below is a summary of a teacher salary parity study conducted by the Maryland Association of Nonpublic Special Education Facilities (MANSEF).

Maryland Summary				
# of Schools In Response	# of Schools with Salary Disparity	Total Salary Differential*	Total Teacher FTEs*	Average Salary Difference per FTE*
77	67	\$12,734,212.93	787.46	\$16,171.25
Garrett/ Allegany/ Washington				
# of Schools In Response	# of Schools with Salary Disparity	Total Salary Differential*	Total Teacher FTEs*	Average Salary Difference per FTE*
4	4	\$408,330.14	26	\$15,705.01
Frederick/ Carroll/ Howard				
# of Schools In Response	# of Schools with Salary Disparity	Total Salary Differential*	Total Teacher FTEs*	Average Salary Difference per FTE*
5	5	\$991,543.45	72.05	\$13,761.88
Montgomery				
# of Schools In Response	# of Schools with Salary Disparity	Total Salary Differential*	Total Teacher FTEs*	Average Salary Difference per FTE*
20	20	\$4,230,482.30	212.1	\$19,945.70
Anne Arundel				
# of Schools In Response	# of Schools with Salary Disparity	Total Salary Differential*	Total Teacher FTEs*	Average Salary Difference per FTE*
7	3	\$375,247.00	26.5	\$14,160.26
Prince George's				
# of Schools In Response	# of Schools with Salary Disparity	Total Salary Differential*	Total Teacher FTEs*	Average Salary Difference per FTE*
10	6	\$1,823,014.60	73.1	\$24,938.64
Baltimore County				
# of Schools In Response	# of Schools with Salary Disparity	Total Salary Differential*	Total Teacher FTEs*	Average Salary Difference per FTE*
17	15	\$2,392,561.04	176.51	\$13,554.82
Baltimore City				
# of Schools In Response	# of Schools with Salary Disparity	Total Salary Differential*	Total Teacher FTEs*	Average Salary Difference per FTE*
9	9	\$2,067,428.40	159.2	\$12,986.36
Harford/ Cecil/ Caroline				
# of Schools In Response	# of Schools with Salary Disparity	Total Salary Differential*	Total Teacher FTEs*	Average Salary Difference per FTE*
5	5	\$445,606.00	42	\$10,609.67

* only schools with salary disparity have data included in these columns