



PSSAM
Public School Superintendents' Association
OF MARYLAND

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BILL: HB 243

TITLE: Baltimore City Young Readers Program - Expansion and Alterations
(Young Readers Program Expansion Act of 2023)

DATE: February 8, 2023

POSITION: Support

COMMITTEE: Ways and Means

CONTACT: Mary Pat Fannon, Executive Director, PSSAM

The Public School Superintendents' Association of Maryland (PSSAM), on behalf of all twenty-four local school superintendents, **supports** House Bill 243.

This bill renames and expands the Baltimore City Young Readers Program to the Statewide Young Readers Program in the Maryland State Library Agency. The bill also increases the mandated appropriation for this new statewide initiative to \$500,000, previously \$250,000.

The Maryland Governor's Young Readers Program is an affiliate of Dolly Parton's Imagination Library and is a book gifting program that mails free, high-quality books to children, no matter their family's income. The program delivers a free book every month to any Baltimore family with children from infancy through age four. It's a great way to introduce very young kids to the joys of reading and storytelling.

Baltimore City's program has reached more than 4,400 families through a variety of service organizations and city and state agencies. We look forward to the statewide expansion of this innovative and effective early reading program.

For these reasons, PSSAM **supports** House Bill 243 and requests a favorable report.