

Chair Brian Feldman  
Vice Chair Cheryl Kagan  
The Senate of Maryland Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee  
Position: SUPPORT for SB 0271

Dear Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and fellow committee members,

Hello, I am currently a high school junior in Howard County. When I first got to high school I was unaware of the importance of being civically engaged. Over the past few years, elections have become increasingly important as they are being decided within single margins in some states.

It was not until last year, when I interned on a local campaign, I understood the impact of being civically engaged can have in society. Activities that exposed me to the realm of politics, such as Model United Nations, motivated me to become more involved in the civic process.

I truly believe that this program would encourage teens to become more politically involved. In my school back in November, they invited the Howard County Board of Elections where at lunch shifts they advertised the position of an election judge. Many of my peers were enticed by the thought of earning money by becoming an election judge. However, in the process, they became more civically engaged and got registered to vote even if they weren't selected to be a judge in the end. Offering an incentive such as the Civic Excellence Award will surely entice more young people to become more civically engaged.

While this bill may start at the school level, I believe that this bill will impact the greater community and beyond, and having this award will only open up more opportunities for further civic engagement.

Best Regards,  
Eneanya Obioha