

WRITTEN TESTIMONY.pdf

Uploaded by: johnny salling

Position: FWA

JOHNNY RAY SALLING
Legislative District 6
Baltimore County

Budget and Taxation Committee

Public Safety, Transportation,
and Environment Subcommittee



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THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
Senator Brian J. Feldman
Senator Cheryl C. Kagan
2 West
Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

To the Chair, Vice Chair and Committee Members of the Education, Energy and the Environment Committee:

I express my gratitude to the Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Education, Energy and the Environment Committee for allowing me to address Senate Bill 112. The bill proposes that all local Boards of Education in Maryland and Baltimore City establish a policy concerning student cell phone use. Importantly, it does not mandate the prohibition of cell phone use but encourages State Boards of Education to enact comprehensive policies and I have submitted an amendment to reflect as such.

The establishment of a cell phone policy provides clear guidelines for students and staff, minimizing confusion and fostering a focused learning environment. Such policies, while not imposing a universal ban, contribute to preventing distractions during classes, exams, and other educational activities. Moreover, they address issues like cyberbullying and harassment, creating a safer online space for students.

In addition, implementing a cell phone policy encourages responsible use of technology, guiding students on when and where it is appropriate to use their devices. These policies can also outline measures to address privacy concerns related to the use of cameras on cell phones within school premises. By not prohibiting cell phones outright, the policy allows for flexibility while setting guidelines for communication methods and times. This approach supports the integration of technology into the learning process and reflects a consensus within the community, involving parents, educators, and students in shaping guidelines suitable for the local educational environment.

Once again, thank you for considering the importance of this proposal, and I trust that the committee will carefully weigh the potential benefits of Senate Bill 112 in shaping a positive and effective educational environment for our students.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in red ink that reads "Johnny Ray Salling".

Senator Johnny Ray Salling

FINAL SB112 Testimony - Oppose - AACPS.pdf

Uploaded by: Grace Wilson

Position: UNF



**SB112 – COUNTY BOARDS OF EDUCATION – STUDENT CELLULAR PHONE USE – POLICY
REQUIRED**

January 17, 2024

EDUCATION, ENERGY, AND THE ENVIRONMENT

OPPOSE

Grace Wilson, Legislative & Policy Specialist (410.440.1758)

Anne Arundel County Public Schools (AACPS) opposes **SB112 – County Boards of Education – Student Cellular Phone Use – Policy Required**. This bill requires each county board to develop and adopt a policy prohibiting students from using a cell phone during instructional time unless a teacher expressly directs students to use cell phones for educational purposes.

State law establishes educational matters that affect the counties shall be under the control of the county board of education, and that local boards of education, “determine, with advice from the county Superintendent, the educational policies of the county school system.” AACPS supports local control of educational policies and opposes efforts such as this that would reduce or circumscribe local board authority to establish school system policy. Local boards of education receive and rely on public input and are best able to address local needs. The relationship between the community and local public schools encourages participation by parents, guardians and other community members.

While AACPS believes that students should not be using cell phones during instructional time unless directed by a teacher, this bill infringes upon the ability of local school systems to establish policies and procedures that best address the needs of their communities.

Accordingly, AACPS respectfully requests an **UNFAVORABLE** committee report on SB112.

SB 112.Cell Phone Use in Classrooms.pdf

Uploaded by: John Woolums

Position: UNF

BILL: Senate Bill 112
TITLE: County Boards of Education - Student Cellular Phone Use - Policy Required
POSITION: OPPOSE
DATE: January 17, 2024
COMMITTEE: Education, Energy, and the Environment
CONTACT: John R. Woolums, Esq.

The Maryland Association of Boards of Education (MABE) opposes Senate Bill 112.

MABE appreciates the intent of this bill to improve conditions for teaching and learning by requiring that each school system adopt a policy regarding student cell phone use in the classroom. However, MABE believes that the decision on whether and how to adopt such a policy should be the responsibility of each local board of education. In addition, because this bill would mandate local policies imposing strict prohibitions on cellular phone use in a classroom unless expressly permitted by the teacher, in enacted it would likely result in mandatory changes to student discipline policies and practices as well.

Local boards of education play a vital role in governing the local school system, advocating for public education, and engaging local communities and promoting participation by parents and other community members in the education process so that everyone feels a responsibility for, and ownership of, Maryland's public schools and our students' futures. The development and adoption of local board policies on the use of cell phones in the classroom should certainly be the subject of this locally-drive policy-making process.

Again, MABE believes that by retaining decision-making authority at the local level, local boards of education can fulfill their obligation to consider educational practices, available resources to implement those practices, community input, and academic and financial accountability.

MABE is resolved to continue to support programs to prepare students for college and career readiness through access to online learning, educational technologies, and high-quality digital content; create a fully technology-proficient PreK-12 educator workforce; and provide equitable access to current and emerging technologies for all students and educators and expanded opportunities for parents, families, and the community.

For these reasons, MABE requests an unfavorable report on Senate Bill 112.