



**HOUSE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE**

**HOUSE BILL 1164**

**NONPUBLIC SCHOOLS – TRANSCRIPTS – PROHIBITION ON PUNITIVE MEASURES RELATED TO STUDENT DEBT**

**FEBRUARY 21, 2024**

**OPPOSE**

Maryland CAPE is our state's chapter and one of 40 state chapters of the Council for American Private Education. Our network includes the Catholic, Christian, Evangelical Lutheran, Friends, Independent, Jewish, Lutheran, Montessori, Muslim, and Seventh Day Adventist school communities. We speak on behalf of roughly 130,000 nonpublic school students attending over one thousand nonpublic schools across our great state of Maryland.

Tuition is perhaps the primary means through which a nonpublic school maintains its ability to pay the myriad expenses necessary for proper maintenance and care. It is therefore sometimes necessary for a school to be able to exercise the threat of taking various punitive measures in the event that the responsible party attempts to evade keeping their side of the agreement by paying the school the agreed-upon tuition payment. The tuition agreement between parent or caregiver and the school is freely entered into, and with clear terms. If a parent or caregiver then attempts to evade or renege, it is important that the school have the ability to incentivize them to change course.

It should be noted that many of our schools are forced to operate on a tight budget, and thus even small amounts of payment can have a great impact on their operations. It is important that our schools retain their independence rather than be constrained, as House Bill 1164 would do. We therefore respectfully request an UNFAVORABLE report on House Bill 1164.

Thank you.