

January 31, 2024
HB 213
Maryland STEM Program
House Ways and Means Committee
Position: Support

Honorable members of the Maryland House of Delegates Ways and Means Committee. I am a lifelong science teacher, now a just couple years away from retirement from the Howard County Public Schools System. I've loved my time teaching all kinds of students and collaborating with my smart, creative, kind colleagues, over all these years. My son is even a public school STEM teacher as well, teaching Math in Baltimore County.

The Maryland STEM Program (HB 213) would be a great fit for teachers like me, now and across many stages of my life. As a young teacher, I sought jobs outside of my school responsibilities. One such job was selling pillows...though an opportunity like this program would have certainly been a better fit. Many colleagues search for outside employment as well, as there is some time for such things after the school day is over. Later in my life while raising children, I would have seized an opportunity to teach the subjects I love, earning a little more, making my own schedule after my school day, with a local nonpublic school. I sought ways to do this sort of thing, but an organized program, that I could be working within a state educational framework is ideal. And now, when I'm no longer raising my kids, and also looking towards retirement, I would be eager to build a mutually beneficial schedule with local nonpublic schools, and share my experience with more students.

This is a program that fosters collaboration, sharing of experience and talent, building a stronger education community and giving to community in a way that benefits all participants. As a lifelong public school teacher, this is what we've been taught: to use education to build community, by partnering with fellow educators and teaching to the student. The Maryland STEM program does just that, and I would have been thrilled, at many stages of my career, to benefit from this opportunity. And in this stage, and in the future, I would hope to have an opportunity to access it.

I urge the committee to support this program, as it is beneficial to all stakeholders. The program would offer a means of extra compensation where I could share my experience and my love of science with more students.

Respectfully,

Devorah Urszuy
Oakland Mills High School
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