



HB1395 - ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION - OMBUDSMAN - ESTABLISHMENT

March 6, 2024

WAYS & MEANS COMMITTEE

OPPOSE

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Anne Arundel County Public Schools (AACPS) opposes **HB1395 - Anne Arundel County Board of Education - Ombudsman - Establishment**. This bill requires the before the beginning of the 2024-2025 school year, the county board hire an ombudsman. The president of the board is required to negotiate an employment agreement for the ombudsman. The ombudsman is required to act as a liaison between the county board and members of the community, assist community members in accessing services of Anne Arundel County Public Schools and other State and County education-related services, and engage community partners and local organizations to advance the strategic goals of AACPS. Finally, the ombudsman is required to receive an annual salary of \$120,000.

AACPS and the Board of Education of Anne Arundel County support the addition of an ombudsman to the Office of the County Board to act as a liaison between the county board and members of the community, assist community members in accessing services in AACPS and other State and County education related services, and engage community partners and local organizations to advance the strategic goals of AACPS. Dr. Bedell and the Board have included funding to support the addition of such a position in the FY2025 budget. AACPS appreciates the intent of this legislation to support the creation of such a position. However, AACPS opposes legislation such as this which reduces local board authority and creates unfunded mandates.

Accordingly, AACPS respectfully requests an **UNFAVORABLE** committee report on HB1395.