

Rachael Albaugh  
Career Coach  
Anne Arundel Workforce Development Corporation  
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Linthicum Heights, MD 21090  
RALbaugh@aawdc.org  
February 28, 2025

The Honorable Brian Feldman, Chair  
Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment  
2 West Miller Senate Office Building  
Annapolis, MD 21401

Subject: Opposition to SB 852 – Protecting Career Counseling for Maryland Students

Dear Chairman Feldman and Members of the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee and the Budget and Taxation Committee,

I am deeply concerned about the circumstances this bill will create. As a Career Coach at Lindale Middle School last year and Chesapeake High School this year, these students have proven time and again how powerful this program is in helping them establish career goals, a positive growth mindset, and ease fears of the unknown after high school.

As a Career Coach, I work with students, employers, and educators to ensure young people understand career options, apprenticeships, and workforce training opportunities. I provide this service to them by formats of classroom presentations, career fairs, focused small groups and individual meetings to discuss their future plans. Students seek me out because they know I will answer their questions or point them in the correct direction and empower them to have confidence to make the right choices for themselves. So many students are lacking direction or believe they are not capable of having a successful future. I am inserting an email I received last year from a counselor that demonstrates the need for this program:

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**From:** Macdonald, Tracy L  
**Sent:** Tuesday, October 24, 2023 9:30 AM  
**To:** Rachael Fox  
**Subject:** Great Job

Rachael:

You did a great job presenting your program at yesterday's meeting. I can only imagine how hard it is to be an agent of change and have to advocate so much for your program but I do believe people will very quickly see the value your program brings. I think your work is absolutely necessary. I think I told you that one of my son's friends, Noah, high school had no plan beyond graduation and he had no interest in college. All of his friends including my son left for college and Noah became very depressed and unfocused. Now, Noah had a lot of mental health issues and in the end, he took his own life the summer after the boys returned from their first year of college and it was terrible (I will spare you the details). But, one of the things he mentioned in his note is that he felt left behind. No one had shown him other pathways to career success and so he felt lost and that he had no future. This is why you are needed. To help all of the Noahs out there. Anyways,

The foundation of this program relies on classroom presentations as a means to connect with students and inform them on various skills related to career/college development. As a result of my classroom presentations so far this year, over 800 students out of 1543 have signed up to meet with me individually to discuss their options and the best course of action to progress on their pathway. This has been a rewarding experience over the past 2 years, and nothing makes

me work harder for my students than seeing them light up once they start to really figure out their plan. The tools we use offer them ways to compare schools, gain scholarship opportunities or connect them with trade/apprenticeship options that will allow them to create their career plan and gain much needed confidence along the way.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I welcome the opportunity to share more about how career coaching is positively impacting students across Maryland.

Sincerely,

Rachael Albaugh  
Career Coach  
Anne Arundel Workforce Development Corporation

[Your Name]  
Career Coach  
[Organization/Workforce Board Name]  
[Address]  
[City, State, ZIP]  
[Email]  
[Date]

The Honorable Ben Barnes, Chair  
House Appropriations Committee  
120 Taylor House Office Building  
Annapolis, MD 21401

Subject: Opposition to HB 1461 – Protecting Career Counseling for Maryland Students

Dear Chairman Barnes and Members of the House Appropriations Committee and the Ways & Means Committee,

As a career coach working directly with Maryland's students, I am writing to express my strong opposition to HB 1461, which would eliminate the Career Counseling Program for Middle and High School Students. This program is critical in preparing young people for their future careers, connecting them with real-world workforce opportunities, employer networks, and in-demand career pathways. Eliminating it would be a significant step backward for Maryland's students, workforce, and economy.

As a career coach, I work with students, employers, and educators to ensure young people understand career options, apprenticeships, and workforce training opportunities. Removing this program would:

- **Hurt students** by limiting their access to career exploration, job readiness training, and employer connections.
- **Hurt employers** who rely on a skilled talent pipeline to meet workforce demands in high-growth industries.
- **Hurt Maryland's economy**, as students graduate without clear pathways into family-sustaining careers, leading to higher unemployment and skills gaps.

Rather than eliminating a program that is already proving successful, Maryland should be investing further in career coaching and workforce-aligned career counseling. I urge you to reject HB 1461 and preserve the Career Counseling Program for Middle and High School Students.

Maryland must continue investing in the future of its students, ensuring they have the knowledge, skills, and support necessary to thrive in their careers and contribute to our state's economy.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I welcome the opportunity to share more about how career coaching is positively impacting students across Maryland.

Sincerely,

[Your Name]

Career Coach

[Organization/Workforce Board Name]

[Your Name]  
Career Coach  
[Organization/Workforce Board Name]  
[Address]  
[City, State, ZIP]  
[Email]  
[Date]

The Honorable Ben Barnes, Chair  
House Appropriations Committee  
120 Taylor House Office Building  
Annapolis, MD 21401

Subject: Opposition to HB 1245 – Protecting Career Counseling for Maryland Students

Dear Chairman Barnes and Members of the House Appropriations Committee and the Ways & Means Committee,

As a career coach working directly with Maryland's students, I am writing to express my strong opposition to HB 1461, which would eliminate the Career Counseling Program for Middle and High School Students. This program is critical in preparing young people for their future careers, connecting them with real-world workforce opportunities, employer networks, and in-demand career pathways. Eliminating it would be a significant step backward for Maryland's students, workforce, and economy.

As a career coach, I work with students, employers, and educators to ensure young people understand career options, apprenticeships, and workforce training opportunities. Removing this program would:

- **Hurt students** by limiting their access to career exploration, job readiness training, and employer connections.
- **Hurt employers** who rely on a skilled talent pipeline to meet workforce demands in high-growth industries.
- **Hurt Maryland's economy**, as students graduate without clear pathways into family-sustaining careers, leading to higher unemployment and skills gaps.

Rather than eliminating a program that is already proving successful, Maryland should be investing further in career coaching and workforce-aligned career counseling. I urge you to reject

HB 1245 and preserve the Career Counseling Program for Middle and High School Students. Maryland must continue investing in the future of its students, ensuring they have the knowledge, skills, and support necessary to thrive in their careers and contribute to our state's economy.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I welcome the opportunity to share more about how career coaching is positively impacting students across Maryland.

Sincerely,

[Your Name]

Career Coach

[Organization/Workforce Board Name]