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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

Good afternoon, Chairman Feldman, Vice Chair Kagen, and members of the Education, Energy, and Environment Committee.

My name is Marissa Heuer, and I am a Career Coach with Anne Arundel Student Career Excellence and Anne Arundel Workforce Development. But beyond my job title, this work is personal to me—because I was once in the same position as the students I help today.

I was born and raised right here in Anne Arundel County. I graduated from Severna Park High School. I sat in these same classrooms, walked these same halls, and just like so many students now, I had no idea what I wanted to do with my life.

I played sports, focused on school, and when graduation came, I did what I thought I was supposed to do—I went to college. But I had no plan. No sense of direction. No real idea of what I was working toward. And because of that, I spent thousands of dollars on an education, trying to figure out my future as I went. It left me feeling lost, overwhelmed, and unsure of myself.

Now, my life has done a complete 180. I have the privilege of being in the very position I once desperately needed—a career coach. I get to help students who feel the same confusion I once felt. I get to be a guiding voice, a support system, someone who can walk alongside them and say, *"You don't have to figure this out alone."*

Career coaching isn't just an extra resource—it's a necessity. It gives students the chance to explore their interests, discover new possibilities, and take control of their future before they're out in the world, trying to navigate it on their own. If I had someone like this when I was 16 or 17, my journey might have been different. And that's why I do this work today—so that students don't have to feel lost like I did.

It is an honor and a privilege to be here, to give back to the same community that raised me, and to make sure the students of today have the support they need to build a future they can be excited about.

Thank you.