



**Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee**  
**SB0008 Education – Maryland Civic Excellence Program – Established**  
**Bill Hearing Date January 29, 2025**  
**Position: Support**

January 24, 2025

Dear Honorable Committee Members,

My name is Joshua Oh, and I am a resident of Anne Arundel County. I am writing to express my strong support for Senate Bill 0008, which seeks to establish the **Maryland Seal of Civic Excellence program**.

As a student, I have seen the importance of civic education in shaping responsible, informed citizens. Unfortunately, civic engagement often takes a backseat in our educational system, and this bill offers a critical opportunity to change that.

The Maryland Seal of Civic Excellence will:

- Encourage students to engage more deeply with civic education and activities.
- Highlight the importance of staying informed on local, state, and national issues.
- Inspire schools to integrate more civic learning into their curricula.

I've always loved helping my community. As an elementary schooler, I collected and donated to shelters, but when I asked to volunteer, my age turned me down. My brother and I created a non-profit called Kid Changemakers to get kids involved in service. We've worked for over a decade to benefit our community, and during COVID, we saw the need for diapers. Maryland was one of two states that taxed baby diapers, not adult diapers. We reached out to our state senators, and after rejection, Senator Elfreth believed in us. We lobbied and testified to get SB316 passed, saving 12 million dollars a year for families. It shows us that despite your age, you can make a difference. This program can give students chances to shine and make change when, in the classroom, civics is overshadowed. Students should be awarded for their efforts to help those in their community.

**SB0008** is an investment in the future of Maryland's democracy. By supporting this bill, the committee will help ensure that Maryland's students are empowered to contribute to their communities actively.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Joshua Oh  
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