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BILL: SENATE BILL 368
TITLE: County Boards of Education – Student Cellular Phone Use Policy - Establishment
DATE: January 27, 2025
POSITION: OPPOSE
COMMITTEE: Education, Energy, and the Environment
CONTACT: Brian Dulay, MABE Government Relations Director

The Maryland Association of Boards of Education (MABE) opposes Senate Bill 368 to require each county board of education to develop and implement, not later than a certain school year, a policy limiting the use of a cellular phone by a student during the school day except under certain circumstances; and generally relating to county boards of education and a student cellular phone use policy.

MABE, on behalf of all local boards of education, certainly appreciates and recognizes the need for educators to maintain focus in the classroom and the attention of students during the school day.

However, MABE believes that by retaining decision-making authority at the local level, local boards of education can best balance educational practices, available resources to implement those practices, public input, and academic and financial accountability. Legislation which limits local board decision-making authority may weaken the board's bond with the local community and adversely impact the community's participation in the governance and operation of their local school system.

MABE advocates for State Board of Education and AIB acknowledgment of the governance role of local boards, and the need to preserve local discretion and flexibility when adopting statewide regulations and policies.

For these reasons, MABE opposes Senate Bill 368.