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Chair, Rules Committee
Budget and Taxation Committee
Subcommittees
Capital Budget
Health and Human Services
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Joint Committees
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TESTIMONY OF SENATOR SHELLY HETTLEMAN
SB673 EDUCATION - MARYLAND STEM PROGRAM – ESTABLISHED

Rapid technological advancements are our daily reality. To maintain our leadership in science and technology discovery, we must create an approach to science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) education that prepares and advances students for this future.[1] Our communities must continue to develop students who are skilled in these fields and invest in new research and innovation infrastructures that include all people, regardless of their background. SB673 is a creative solution to preparing all students for a future in these fields, while incentivizing professionals who teach STEM.

The unfortunate reality for many teachers is that they often look for a second job to make ends meet. Frequently, these supplemental jobs have little connection to their professional field. SB673 provides an opportunity for additional compensation for current public school teachers to teach science, technology, engineering, and mathematics at non-public schools. This legislation, which benefits all stakeholders, duplicates an existing program that has had proven implementation success in New Jersey.

There are many reasons why students attend a nonpublic school and families of all backgrounds and economic levels choose this option to best serve their child's unique needs. While acknowledging the ideological opposition for funding for nonpublic schools, we structured this program so all funding flows through public school districts, with no public funds transferring to nonpublic school coffers. This program will not be funded with existing public-school dollars. Instead, this program will be funded with a new, separate appropriation of $250,000 in the annual budget. This program directly serves interest of public school district in many ways:

- By increasing the earning opportunity for public school STEM programs, it potentially eases recruitment and retention of STEM teachers in these districts by

[1] National Science Foundation. *STEM Education for the Future- A Visioning Report*. 2020. https://www.nsf.gov/edu/Materials/STEM%20Education%20for%20the%20Future%20-%202020%20Visioning%20Report.pdf

giving the opportunity for public school teachers to teach after the school day ends.
- Increases the supply of STEM teachers, easing the STEM teacher scarcity that is being felt nationwide.

Allowing current teachers to supplement their income within their professional field is a win-win. This program not only benefits the students in nonpublic schools, but benefits our community by exposing ALL students to high quality STEM education, and supports public schools by making it easier to recruit and retain quality teachers.

This legislation allows current teachers to make extra income after regular school hours, making sure they are compensated at their current rate. It supports *all* students by teaching essential skills in STEM by experts in field. For students to compete in today's hi-tech economy, our state cannot afford for *anyone* to fall behind. For these reasons, I ask for a favorable report.