

# **SEIU Local 500 - SB852 - Support.pdf**

Uploaded by: Elly Colmers

Position: FAV

Hearing Testimony March 5, 2025  
Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee  
Service Employees International Union, Local 500

SB852

Child Care Scholarship Program - Youth Transitioning From Foster Placement to Successful Adulthood  
Pilot Program - Establishment

SUPPORT

SEIU Local 500 represents over 20,000 working people in Maryland, Washington D.C., and Virginia. Our union represents the support staff at the Montgomery County Public School system, Family Child Care Providers, Faculty and Staff at several Maryland colleges and universities, staff at non-profits and many other working people across the region. We urge a FAVORABLE Report on SB852 – Child Care Scholarship Program - Youth Transitioning From Foster Placement to Successful Adulthood Pilot Program - Establishment.

SEIU Local 500 believes children are our most important natural resource, and the state must work to meet the needs of all Maryland's children from birth to five and beyond. SB852 aligns with these priorities and will address numerous obstacles and inequities by expanding the definition of a Tier 1 child to include all children who are 3 or 4, are enrolled in full-day prekindergarten, and have a disability or are from a home in which English is not the primary language spoken. This bill builds upon legislation that passed in 2023 that added homeless youth to the definition of Tier 1 child.

SEIU Local 500's priorities include ensuring families have access to affordable, consistent, quality child care and prekindergarten options and to alleviate barriers for families. We believe that SB852 would go a long way in ensuring that our most vulnerable children and their families are supported when enrolled in full-day prekindergarten.

Therefore, we request a favorable report on Senate Bill 852, as it represents an investment in the futures of Maryland's most vulnerable youth.

## **SB 852**

Uploaded by: Grace Wilson

Position: FAV



## **SB852 – BLUEPRINT FOR MARYLAND’S FUTURE – ALTERATIONS**

March 5, 2025

EDUCATION, ENERGY, AND THE ENVIRONMENT

### **SUPPORT**

Grace Wilson, Senior Legislative & Policy Specialist (410.440.1758)

Anne Arundel County Public Schools (AACPS) supports **SB852 – Blueprint for Maryland’s Future – Alterations**. This bill makes numerous alterations to the Blueprint for Maryland’s Future (Blueprint) law. AACPS believes in the vision of the Blueprint for Maryland’s Future to transform public education in the State by fully and equitably funding world class public education. AACPS is committed to implementing the Blueprint with fidelity, while also advocating for Blueprint reform as necessary to account for lessons learned during the first three years of implementation. AACPS supports SB852 which proposes numerous needed changes to the Blueprint to ensure continued successful implementation of this transformative law.

Specifically, AACPS appreciated clarification provided by this bill that terms or conditions relating to the employment of school personnel that are subject to collective bargaining will continue to be covered by the collective bargaining process and are not under the authority of the Accountability and Implementation Board (AIB). AACPS was delayed in submitting a career ladder to the AIB for approval due to an impasse in bargaining on a separate negotiated issue. This resulted in conflict between State collective bargaining law and the Blueprint for Maryland’s Future, and confusion on how to resolve this conflict. Ultimately, the collective bargaining process played out and AACPS was able to submit and receive approval for our career ladder. This change in law will eliminate any conflicts between collective bargaining law and the Blueprint and ensure that collective bargaining is maintained at the local level.

AACPS also supports the removal of assistant principals and principals from the career ladder provisions of the Blueprint. Administrators in AACPS are currently represented by separate units. Removing administrators from the career ladder better aligns with school systems’ organizational structures. Furthermore, National Board Certification is not an appropriate benchmark for administrators. If NBC is determined to be a necessary certification for administrators, administrators without NBC should be permitted the opportunity to be grandfathered into this requirement.

Moreover, AACPS supports a study by MSDE of the adequacy of special education funding in the State. AACPS will spend more than \$202.9 million in fiscal year 2025 to provide direct services to approximately 10,800 students with disabilities. However, AACPS will receive only \$32 million in federal special education funding. Foundation funding is utilized to close the difference between federal funding for special education and actual expenditures providing specialized education. As such, increased funding is necessary to provide our special education students with access to high quality programs and instruction to meet their unique needs.



AACPS believes the changes proposed SB852 will ensure the continued successful implementation of the Blueprint for Maryland's Future. Accordingly, AACPS respectfully requests a **FAVORABLE** committee report on SB852.

# **HCPS.Support.SB852.3.3.2025.pdf**

Uploaded by: Katie Ridgway

Position: FAV

**March 3, 2025**

**To:** The Honorable Members of the Maryland State Senate

**Re:** Support for SB 852

Dear Senators,

I am writing to express my strong support for Senate Bill 852 (SB 852), which proposes essential modifications to the Blueprint for Maryland's Future. These adjustments originate from the collective expertise of twenty-four Maryland Superintendents, who have identified critical areas requiring improvement, course correction, or intervention to prevent potential challenges threatening the outcomes of the Blueprint. (See: PSSAM Legislative and Policy Recommendations.)

One key issue that must be addressed is the **Career Counseling Pilot with Local Workforce Investment Boards (WIBs)**. It is important to clarify, the proposed amendment does not eliminate career counseling altogether; rather, it ends the restrictive pilot phase, granting school districts the flexibility to design and implement career counseling programs that best meet the needs of their students.

**HCPS supports allowing Local Education Agencies (LEAs) the immediate discretion to discontinue the pilot** partnerships with workforce investment boards a year ahead of the pilot's expiration. The current pilot's implementation has been inconsistent and problematic, creating unnecessary barriers rather than enhancing student career readiness. Where career counseling programs are working well, they are largely led by district-hired and trained staff, reinforcing the need for direct district control.

*Our position in summary is as follows:*

- **HCPS Leads in Career Readiness** – HCPS has been a state leader in apprenticeships, career credential attainment, and fostering a career-driven mindset. Despite this success, the career counseling pilot prohibits funds from being used to support apprenticeships, restricting the district's ability to further capitalize on proven innovation.
- **Current Pilot has Ineffective Use of Funds** – A significant portion of funding is absorbed by WIB overhead costs (14% in Harford County), covering office space, network expenses, and non-career coaching salaries instead of directly benefiting students.
- **Current Pilot has Bureaucratic Inefficiencies**– Excessive red tape requires legal reviews from multiple entities for contracts, delaying progress. The WIB has never been able to fully staff required positions, and onboarding career coaches takes months, limiting student access to support.
- **The Career Counseling Pilot Hinders Progress** – Rigid requirements and bureaucratic obstacles prevent HCPS from effectively connecting students to real career opportunities, making career counseling an abstract process rather than a bridge to hands-on experiences.
- **Legislative Action is Needed** – SB 852 and HB 1245 would allow districts to directly manage career counseling, maximize the impact of funds, and streamline processes, ensuring that resources are used effectively to support students in achieving meaningful career and college experiences.

*The full details of our position are as follows:*

**HCPS has been a state leader in apprenticeships, career credential attainment, and fostering a career-driven mindset among students.** The very areas where we excel receive no career counseling funds, and we are explicitly prohibited from using these funds to support apprenticeships. Yet, despite these constraints, as of last week, 276 students are actively participating in apprenticeships—an achievement driven entirely by our ability to innovate and adapt. Our success comes from flexibility and forward-thinking approaches, both of which are undermined by the rigid and restrictive requirements of the career counseling pilot. Rather than supporting progress, these limitations often serve as obstacles, making it harder, not easier, to connect students with meaningful career opportunities.

It is baffling that career counseling funds cannot be used to directly support students in accessing real career experiences. The idea that there must be a rigid separation between career counseling and actually connecting students to tangible opportunities is entirely counterproductive. There is no iron curtain between guiding students and giving them the hands-on experiences that will shape their futures. Career counseling should not be an abstract exercise. It should be a bridge that leads students directly to meaningful career pathways. **When we focus on outcomes instead of rigid processes, we see real progress.** However, when we are required to follow inefficient, bureaucratic structures, results suffer, and resources are wasted.

The HCPS experience with the career counseling pilot is significant:

- **Ineffective Use of Funds**—a significant portion of funding is absorbed by WIB overhead costs rather than benefiting students. In Harford County, we are charged a total of 14% of funds diverted to overhead, while HCPS uses 0% of funds for such expenses.
  - › \$49,000 for a share of WIB office space.
  - › \$34,000 for a portion of their network costs.
  - › \$238,000 for *non-career coaching* office staff salaries.
- **Excessive bureaucracy**—three different lawyers must review every contract before it can move forward. The excessive time spent negotiating and overcoming administrative obstacles detracts from other educational priorities.
- **Persistent staffing shortages**—our WIB has never been able to fully staff the positions required for the pilot. It takes months for our partner to onboard a career coach and place them in schools.

HCPS has made extensive efforts to work within the pilot's framework, but the structural issues remain. Unfilled positions, bureaucratic delays, and a lack of authority to directly manage career counseling have negatively impacted students' access to essential resources.

If given the opportunity to suspend the career counseling pilot, to innovate, and to achieve the outcomes that the Blueprint aspires to, we would use the career counseling funds to:

- Truly improve the connections to students for individualized career pathways, strengthen the efficient use of expertise of our business partners (including our WIB).
- Connect students to the opportunities for career or college experiences by making the process seamless and integrated into the student experience.

**With the flexibility to design a system that prioritizes outcomes over rigid processes, we would create a dynamic, student-centered approach that ensures every learner has access to the guidance, experiences, and resources necessary to confidently step into their future.**

*We respectfully urge legislators to support SB 852 and HB 1245, which will empower districts to:*

- ✓ **Directly manage career counseling**, tailoring programs to local structures and needs and workforce demands.
- ✓ **Maximize the impact of funds**, ensuring resources benefit students rather than administrative overhead. Increasing the return on investment is a win for all.
- ✓ **Streamline processes**, reducing inefficiencies and bureaucratic hurdles.

HCPS remains committed to partnering with our local workforce board in ways that leverage their strengths—particularly their expertise in workforce development. However, we also ask for the opportunity to build on our own successes, as evidenced by our leadership in career readiness programs.

Please support SB 852 to allow districts flexibility to lead the future of career counseling and ensure the best outcomes for Maryland students.

Thank you,



Sean Bulson, Ed. D.  
Superintendent  
[sean.bulson@hcps.org](mailto:sean.bulson@hcps.org)



Katie Ridgway  
Chief of Staff  
[katie.ridgway@hcps.org](mailto:katie.ridgway@hcps.org)

# **SB 852 - Blueprint for Maryland's Future - Alterat**

Uploaded by: Mary Pat Fannon

Position: FAV



Mary Pat Fannon, Executive Director  
1217 S. Potomac Street  
Baltimore, MD 21224  
410-935-7281  
marypat.fannon@pssam.org

---

BILL: SB 852

TITLE: Blueprint for Maryland's Future – Alterations

DATE: March 5, 2025

POSITION: Favorable

COMMITTEE: Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee  
Senate Budget and Taxation Committee

CONTACT: Mary Pat Fannon, Executive Director, PSSAM

---

The Public School Superintendents' Association of Maryland (PSSAM), on behalf of all twenty-four Maryland local school superintendents, strongly supports Senate Bill 852.

This legislation makes multiple changes to the Blueprint for Maryland's Future including adjustments to College and Career Readiness (CCR) initiatives, including changes to the Career Counseling Program and funding for post-CCR pathways; required reporting by county boards on per-school funding for certain programs; providing a waiver from the minimum funding per school requirement for schools with 350 or fewer students; altering the definition of "Tier I child" for purposes of publicly funded prekindergarten to include special education students and multilingual learners; changes to the career ladder provisions for school-based administrators and future salary incentives for re-certification of National Board Certified (NBC) educators; requiring an adequacy study of special education and the effectiveness of NBC in student achievement and diverse teacher recruitment; and, clarifying language regarding collective bargaining provisions.

As the state's top educators, the local superintendents strongly stand behind the Blueprint and applaud those who have fought hard to make this vision a reality. We have gained invaluable experience and insight after three years of implementation - celebrating early successes, but also experiencing frustrations and challenges. We thank the sponsor for her leadership in putting forth this legislation that largely encompasses our 2025 policy and legislative recommendations. Those recommendations were the result of analyzing student data, qualitative experiences of educators and staff, and thoughtful contemplation of the following questions:

- How is this pillar/activity/initiative performing against *Our Core Mission and Measure of Success - Student Growth and Achievement*?
- What has been accomplished that enhances and promotes *student achievement*?

- What is new, or enhanced that has *worked*?
- What has challenged our ability to grow *student success*?
- What has been our ‘*Return on Investment (ROI?)*’ on each activity?
  - Will further investments in an initiative achieve *student success*?

We look forward to working with the Committees as you carefully consider this legislation.

### **Administrators on the Career Ladder**

*This legislation amends the statute to remove Assistant Principals (APs) and Principals from the Blueprint’s career ladder provisions.* This adjustment aligns with long-established bargaining structures in school systems, where teachers and administrators are represented by separate units. In addition, declassifying APs and Principals as “teachers” exempts them from teaching requirements in the Blueprint, and more accurately reflects their leadership roles in schools.

This change also removes any requirement that principals must earn National Board Certification (NBC). NBC is a teaching credential and not appropriate or representative of administrators roles.

### **PreK Tier I Students**

*These provisions would move special education students and multilingual learners students into Tier I for funding purposes.* In previous sessions the General Assembly identified these students in the top tier, but in FY ‘26, they returned to Tier II or Tier III status, and are no longer priority PreK populations. This bill would make them ineligible for State funding for both private and public providers.

### **Career Counseling**

*This legislation will return the per pupil funding to the Local Education Agency (LEA) to continue the important work of career counseling at the expiration of the pilot funding in FY '26. Starting in FY '27 the LEAs will take the lead in running the program and the partnerships with local workforce investment boards and community colleges are encouraged, but not mandated.*

The implementation of this initiative has been problematic and inconsistent. Where it is working well, it is largely implemented by staff hired and trained by the districts, and should be implemented within LEAs. It is essential to continue partnering with the local community college and workforce boards, but career coaches should be employed directly by the local school system. In the extensive Blueprint review by the superintendents this fall, this partnership rose to the top of the "NOT WORKING" list of Blueprint programs. With \$55 million a year at stake, this is too important to get wrong. Where these programs have had success, they should continue, but local discretion is key to ensure funds are used in the most effective and efficient way that will *invest in students*.



## Money Following the Student - Administrative Reporting Requirements

One of the guiding principles of the Blueprint was that money should follow students in order to ensure equity and adequacy. The statute required that eight funding streams be reported separately - demonstrating that 75% of the funding flows directly to the student's school. However, the drafting of the statute reflects a limited knowledge of the intricacies of school funding accountability, and the rigidity of this provision has created an administrative nightmare for school systems without truly accomplishing the goals. *This small, but important change will allow for Blueprint categories to be reported by school level, instead of by individual Blueprint category.* Under the bill - these would all be added together and there would be one compliance target. It is important to note that this is identical to how Title I funds are budgeted and spent "School Wide" (spend money on the whole school) and not "Targeted Assistance" (only spending money on the students in poverty at the school).

This proposal would have numerous benefits for the districts, while maintaining the integrity of the "Money Following the Student" tenet including:

- Greatly alleviate accounting and human resources compliance burdens;
- Demonstration of money flowing to the schools;
- Easier interpretation by the public once the dashboard is made public;
- Policymakers (including MSDE and AIB) can still see how districts are spending money through monthly "State Category and Object reporting."

Lastly, this provision greatly allows schools the flexibility to develop resource plans to implement their school improvement plans with less bureaucracy. For instance, school funding is based on the prior years' student enrollment/demographics. This aggregation allows for flexibility when there are unexpected changes in student demographics from one year to the next - such as an influx of multilingual learners in one year, with a decline in the same student populations the following year.

*The bill also provides a waiver of this reporting provision for schools with fewer than 350 students.* This policy is currently under consideration by the AIB and the MSDE and we encourage the Committees to work with them before adopting any statutory changes.

## National Board "Maintenance of Certification" (MOC)

This legislation proposes a measured approach to the issue of maintenance of certification. During the Kirwan Commission's deliberations, the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards' had a 10 year cycle for the Maintenance of Certification for NBC teachers. By the time the Blueprint became law, the National Board had decreased the re-certification time period to every 5 years. The change has significant salary impacts for the State and local governments, especially over the lifetime of a young teacher. *Therefore, this legislation would reduce the State's contribution to:*

- \$4,000 (down from \$8,000) for the first MOC;
- \$4,000 (down from \$7,000) for the second MOC; and,
- \$3,000 increase (down from \$6,000) for the third MOC.

However, it is important to note that some LEAs have already negotiated these provisions in good faith and are relying on State reimbursements. *Therefore, any changes should apply prospectively to avoid disrupting existing agreements; this protection is reflected in Section 5 of the bill.*

### **Access to College and Career Pathways**

*This bill addresses two aspects of College and Career Readiness (CCR):*

- *Funding flexibility for income-eligible students, and*
- *Ensuring a balance of new costs for dual enrollment between school systems and community colleges.*

Currently the Blueprint requires all students meeting CCR to enroll in a post-CCR pathway at no cost to the student or their families. These pathways include:

- Competitive entry college prep (IB, Cambridge, or AP).
- Dual enrollment leading to an associate degree or 60 college credits.
- Career and technical education (CTE) programs, apprenticeships, or industry certifications.

The superintendents believe the implications of unfettered access to all of these resources is fiscally unsound, and as we look for ways to make the Blueprint affordable, this should be a serious consideration of the Legislature. To ensure the sustainability of this open-access model, LEAs should have the flexibility to target funding for tuition and ancillary costs.

*Lastly, Section 2 provides “intent” language that there is an appropriate balance of shared and new costs between county boards and community colleges for dual enrollment students.* Dual enrollment has been a major success of the Blueprint, but the administrative and fiscal application has been uneven across the State. Some school systems have taken on additional costs that were not part of pre-Blueprint agreements with community colleges - specifically - new and increased fees - not just increased tuition. The huge State investment in dual enrollment should not bolster the bottomline for community colleges, or create a new cost shift for local school systems.

### **Special Education**

*Section 4 compels MSDE to undertake an adequacy study of special education funding, including:*

- The adequacy of current funding formulas;
- The feasibility of weighted funding based on disability level; and,
- Transportation and nonpublic school placement costs.

Local school systems spend over [\\$1 billion in special education services](#) that are *NOT* reimbursed by the state and federal governments. This is the untold story of education funding - there is no "discretionary" funding for LEAs - they use almost all of their unrestricted funding for these necessary services.

For instance, in Frederick County, special education costs are just under \$90 million, but FCPS receives only \$44 million from the state and federal governments, leaving the remaining \$46 million to be paid out of local funds. In Montgomery County, special education costs are \$452 million, but MCPS receives only \$210 million from the state and federal governments, leaving the remaining \$242 million to be paid out of local funds.

Every single school system would be able to fully implement the Blueprint and exceed its goals and expectations if they were able to fully use the Foundation as intended, without the need to use these funds to pay for profound deficits in special education. To be VERY clear - these are costs to cover the legitimate and necessary costs of educating our most vulnerable students. Services that these students and families are entitled to and school systems are committed to providing them. But there is no denying how extraordinary these costs are, and they will continue to grow. We must dive deep into this issue and explore sustainable funding options.

### **National Board Certification - Effectiveness**

*Section 3 directs the AIB to explore critical questions related to the effectiveness of NBC in teacher recruitment and student achievement. Specifically,*

- The relationship between NBC and student achievement outcomes;
- The successful attainment of NBC (and commensurate salary increases) for diverse teacher candidates; and,
- The feasibility of additional, parallel pathways that better address the diverse needs of all educators.

### **Collective Bargaining Safeguards**

*This legislation protects due process in collective bargaining in State law. Specifically, it restricts the AIB's influence over long-standing collective bargaining processes except for elements directly related to the career ladder for educators.*

The Blueprint's goals are achievable, but the implementation needs to be streamlined and realistic with clearer expectations and guidance from State leaders. We ask for the committees' serious consideration as we work together to ensure the success of the Blueprint and

Therefore, PSSAM **supports** Senate Bill 852 and kindly requests a **favorable** report.

**\*\*For more detail on PSSAM's Legislative and Policy Recommendations, [click here](#).**

# **SB852-EEE-UNF.pdf**

Uploaded by: Nina Themelis

Position: FAV



BRANDON M. SCOTT  
MAYOR

*Office of Government Relations  
88 State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401*

**SB852**

March 5, 2025

**TO:** Members of the Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

**FROM:** Nina Themelis, Director of Mayor's Office of Government Relations

**RE:** Senate Bill 852 - Blueprint for Maryland's Future - Alterations

**POSITION: OPPOSE**

Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and Members of the Committee, please be advised that the Baltimore City Administration (BCA) **opposes** Senate Bill (SB) 852.

SB852 would repeal the career counseling services for middle and high school students provided by Maryland's local workforce development boards, community colleges and local education agencies started under the Blueprint for Maryland's Future. These services ensure that students receive real-time, industry-aligned career counseling, helping to build a skilled workforce and address skill gaps in Maryland's economy.

Maryland's local workforce development boards, including the Baltimore Workforce Development Board and the Mayor's Office of Employment Development, play a critical role in bridging the gap between education and employment, offering direct connections to employers, labor market insights, and career pathway resources.

In Baltimore City this model has already achieved major accomplishments with:

- 46 workforce professionals deployed to middle and high schools for one to four days a week.
- Holding more 1,000 events, including workshops, company tours/job shadows, career fair support, and guest speaker engagements.
- More than 17,000 students reached as of February 2025, in less than one year, ensuring they have the tools to make informed career decisions.

SB852 would cut short these partnerships between our workforce boards, educators, and businesses. By ending a program that aligns career counseling with labor market needs, this legislation risks the preparedness of Maryland's future workforce for high-demand careers in growing industries.

For the above stated reasons, the BCA respectfully requests an **unfavorable** report on SB852.

# **SB0852-EEE\_MACo\_SWA.pdf**

Uploaded by: Kevin Kinnally

Position: FWA



## **Senate Bill 852**

### *Blueprint for Maryland's Future - Alterations*

MACo Position: **SUPPORT WITH  
AMENDMENTS**

To: Education, Energy, and the Environment  
and Budget and Taxation Committees

Date: March 5, 2025

From: Sarah Sample and Kevin Kinnally

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **SUPPORTS SB 852 WITH AMENDMENTS**. This bill seeks to adjust a number of components of the State's visionary education plan, the Blueprint for Maryland's Future (Blueprint). The provisions of the bill focus broadly on early education, teacher development, college and career readiness, and resource allocation.

The shifts proposed in SB 852 have the potential to come at a time when the Blueprint plan faces an environment dramatically unlike that envisioned during its initial forecasts. The pandemic, labor market, and cost-drivers have altered the underpinning of this landmark effort. County governments have been funding partners, making record-setting financial commitments over three years of the roll-out, with the vast majority of jurisdictions funding well over their local share of Blueprint costs. Even with these historic investments, education experts from across the state have highlighted challenges both operational and financial that could compromise the shared outcomes of the plan. SB 852 presents an opportunity to address some of those obvious and demonstrated challenges. While counties take no issue with the majority of the proposals in the bill, MACo offers some narrow changes to support greater local flexibility and continued accountability.

First, SB 852 seeks to repeal the career counseling programs established between the local board of education, local workforce development board, and the county's community college. Counties strongly agree with the Blueprint that local workforce development boards are best equipped to manage such programs, but one size often does not fit all. While the workforce development boards are the most obvious division to carry out this work, the counties and school boards should be able to exercise some discretion, if for any reason it appears that the current arrangements for these programs are not fulfilling the requirements. To this end, **MACo suggests an amendment to the bill allowing county governments, in agreement with the school board, to exercise the option to move these programs into either the county government or the local school system to carry out the charge with the specified funding.**

Second, there has been a substantial, and in some instances unnecessary, degree of burden that local school systems have endured due to the overly prescriptive nature of Blueprint funding.

Superintendents have made clear that the funding formula and strategy is another one-size-fits-all approach that lacks an understanding and appreciation for the diversity of communities across Maryland. School leaders across the jurisdictions have respectfully requested, and counties echo that request here, to give more flexibility on allocating and reporting funding in certain instances.

**Specifically, an amendment to SB 852 that allows financial reporting to be aggregated at the school level rather than by Blueprint category would ease compliance significantly and maintain the integrity of the mandate that 75% of funding follow students to their schools.**

Third, local school systems have put a great deal of effort into engaging and incentivizing high quality teachers to move to underperforming schools. The obstacles presented in these negotiations are very specific to the individual teachers being asked to make what, in many instances, is a substantial life change for them and their family. It can include changes in commuting, work environments, living situations, family schedules, and the like. Focusing state resources narrowly on national board certification stipends limits available resources to a singular incentive, leaving the school system to explore other avenues without access to corresponding resources. For this reason, **counties believe an amendment to the bill should require the State to explore alternative incentive strategies with accompanying state resources to aid local school systems struggling to encourage teacher movement.**

Fourth, while counties appreciate the willingness to bring the Blueprint into alignment with implementation realities, the expense to taxpayers is still overwhelming. The investments in education must continue to comply with the strictest transparency and accountability standards, especially as progress relates to the changes SB 852 demands. To this end, **counties respectfully request an amendment to the bill to require the Maryland State Department of Education to report annually on the effects of any changes to the Blueprint.**

Significant reforms, as those prescribed by the Blueprint, hold great promise but must be built to last. Course corrections in the face of significant obstacles will serve students, educators, and communities better in the long run. SB 852, with the reasonable changes outlined above, can ensure the reform plan will work for all students, teachers, and school leadership. Accordingly, MACo urges a **FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS** report for SB 852.



# **MDAC - 2025 - SB852 - FWA.pdf**

Uploaded by: Liz Zogby

Position: FWA



**SB852 Blueprint for Maryland's Future – Alterations**  
**Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee**  
**March 5, 2025**  
**Position: Favorable with Amendments**

The Maryland Down Syndrome Advocacy Coalition (MDAC) is a coalition of the five Down syndrome organizations in Maryland as well as individuals with Down syndrome and their family members who have come together to advocate for improved quality of life for all individuals with Down syndrome throughout the state of Maryland.

MDAC strongly supports two provisions in SB852: (1) requiring the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) to conduct an adequacy study of Maryland's special education funding and (2) altering the definition of "Tier I" children to explicitly include children with disabilities with respect to eligibility for publicly funded prekindergarten. These two provisions reflect recommendations from the 50-member Blueprint Special Education Workgroup based on member feedback representing a wide range of perspectives including general and special educators, school and district administrators, parents, advocates, experts, related service providers, and others from across Maryland. MDAC co-chair Liz Zogby serves as co-chair of the Workgroup.

The adequacy study was a key recommendation based on unanimous feedback from Workgroup members that current Blueprint funding is not adequate to meet the needs of students with disabilities, and that such a study must consider the adequacy of the foundation program. Inadequate funding impacts the ability of schools to provide students with disabilities with a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) as required by federal and state law because it limits IEP decision-making and available resources, exacerbates staff shortages, and curtails student progress leading to challenging behaviors and more restrictive (and more expensive) placements. There was also unanimity from the Workgroup that multiple weights based on disability and/or intensity of support needs, rather than a single weight for all students with disabilities, is preferred. Other areas of significant concern for Workgroup members were: the feasibility of minimum school funding with a single-weight special education funding model; supplantation of Blueprint special education funding in some districts; the costs of transportation, nonpublic placements, and litigation; and issues like more fluidity in funding to account for enrollment changes, systemic investments and preventative services, and pay and support for paraprofessionals.<sup>1</sup>

Given the urgency of these concerns and their impact on students with disabilities, the study timeline in SB852—to award the contract by July 1, 2026, and report on the results by December 1, 2027—should be accelerated. MDAC proposes amending the timeline described in Section 4(c)(2)

---

<sup>1</sup> See Feedback on Adequate Funding on pp. 13-14, and Recommendations 10-12 on p. 33 in MSDE, *Special Education Workgroup Final Report*, <https://blueprint.marylandpublicschools.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/20/2024/12/12.2024-SEW-Report-Final-A.pdf>

and 4(d) to the following: awarding the contract by January 1, 2026, and the reporting the findings and recommendations by December 15, 2026.

Students with disabilities regardless of income have been included along with Tier I students for prioritization and funding for prekindergarten seats, but are not included in the Blueprint's definition of Tier I. In 2023-24, the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment found that "children with disabilities are less ready than their peers without a disability"—with a gap of 29 points in readiness (18% vs. 47%). Gaps are evident between children with and without disabilities in all domains of the assessment: social foundations, language and literacy, mathematics, and physical well-being and motor development.<sup>2</sup> Prioritizing prekindergarten attendance for children with disabilities is critical to reaching the Blueprint's goals of eliminating these achievement gaps and ensuring all young children are ready for kindergarten. Thus, we strongly support altering the definition of Tier I.

On the other hand, MDAC opposes (1) allowing waivers for minimum school funding requirements for schools with 350 or fewer students, which may have a negative impact on students with disabilities and (2) aggregating the reporting of minimum school funding at the school level instead of by individual Blueprint category. The minimum school funding requirement, with the layers of funding following at-promise students to their school buildings, is the heart of the Blueprint funding model. Chipping away at this requirement reduces accountability for ensuring that adequate resources for students with disabilities and other at-promise students are available for the provision of FAPE. Therefore, MDAC urges amending SB852 by deleting the section related to 5-234 on minimum school funding (p. 2/line 28 through p. 4/line 6).

For these reasons, MDAC appreciates the introduction of this important bill and strongly supports the passage of the provisions related to the special education adequacy study (amending the timeline) and the inclusion of children with disabilities in Tier I for eligibility to publicly funded prekindergarten. Finally, MDAC opposes the changes to minimum school funding and suggests amending by deleting this provision.

Respectfully submitted,

Liz Zogby  
Maryland Down Syndrome Advocacy Coalition  
katzogby@gmail.com  
443-691-1755

---

<sup>2</sup> MSDE, [Readiness Matters: Kindergarten Readiness Assessment Report](#), 2023-24.

N.B.: The KRA previously used by Maryland is being discontinued due to concerns of biased testing items. A new KRA will be implemented in SY 25-26. See: <https://news.maryland.gov/msde/msde-adopts-new-kra/>

# **BC - SWA\_ Senate Bill 852 (1).pdf**

Uploaded by: Riya Gupta

Position: FWA



**SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENTS:** Senate Bill 852  
**Senate Bill 852: Blueprint for Maryland's Future - Alterations**  
**Position: Favorable with Amendments**  
Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee  
March 5, 2025

The Blueprint Coalition, a 30+ member organization representing hundreds of thousands of Marylanders and co-led by Strong Schools Maryland and the Maryland State Education Association, is dedicated to complete implementation and funding of the Blueprint for Maryland's Future. We submit this testimony in support of parts of Senate Bill 852 but recommend significant amendments due to concerns about key provisions.

We strongly support provisions in the bill that advance equity and strengthen educational opportunities. Expanding the definition of "Tier I child" for publicly funded prekindergarten (Page 13, Lines 14–27) will ensure children with disabilities and those from multilingual homes have greater access to early education. The study on the impact of National Board Certification (Page 16, Lines 18–30) is essential for understanding its role in improving teacher effectiveness and retention. Likewise, the required study on the adequacy of Maryland's special education funding (Page 17, Lines 1–26) is a necessary step to ensuring students with disabilities receive the support they need.

However, other provisions in the bill raise concerns about equity and implementation of the Blueprint:

- **Waiving Minimum School Funding for Smaller Schools (Page 4, Line 4):** The minimum funding requirement ensures that resources follow students. The Blueprint mandates that at least 75% of funding must follow students, with no upper limit on additional resources a school can receive. While schools with fewer than 350 students may appear overfunded, this waiver does not address that issue. Instead, it risks undermining funding equity for high-need student populations.
- **Aggregating Provisions of 5-234 at the School Level (Page 4, Lines 5–6):** Aggregation would make it significantly harder to track whether Blueprint funds are being used as intended. The Blueprint's categorical funding structure ensures resources are targeted to specific priorities. Aggregating expenditures at the school level would obscure whether funds are actually being spent on essential initiatives or being redirected elsewhere. Breaking down expenditures by category is not just a bureaucratic exercise; it is a critical safeguard to ensure funding supports students as intended. Simply showing that money reaches a school does not guarantee it is being spent on the right supports for the students who need them most.
- **Post-CCR Pathway Eligibility and FARMs Limitations (Page 14, Line 3 – Page 15, Line 13):** The bill allows county boards to set income eligibility limits for post-college and career readiness (CCR) pathway costs, except for students eligible for Free and Reduced-Price Meals (FARMs). This is particularly concerning because FARMs eligibility has long been criticized as an incomplete measure of financial need. Many families who do not qualify for FARMs still struggle with school-related costs, including lunch. Limiting financial support for CCR pathways based solely on FARMs could create additional barriers for students who need these opportunities to succeed. We

urge the General Assembly to adopt a more comprehensive approach to eligibility that accounts for regional cost-of-living variations and recognizes that FARMs alone does not capture the full picture of economic hardship.

- **Limiting AIB Authority Over Collective Bargaining (Page 4, Lines 19–24):** This change is unnecessary because the AIB already has no authority over collective bargaining beyond career ladder provisions. It does not alter existing power dynamics and serves no clear purpose in improving Blueprint implementation.

We urge the Committee to amend Senate Bill 852 to remove these provisions while retaining the essential studies and expanded prekindergarten eligibility. The Blueprint Coalition believes these changes will ensure the bill remains aligned with the goal of providing equitable, high-quality education to all Maryland students. **For these reasons, the Blueprint Coalition respectfully requests a favorable report only with major amendments to Senate Bill 852.**

**Please contact** Riya Gupta at [riya@strongschoolsmaryland.org](mailto:riya@strongschoolsmaryland.org) for additional questions.

# **BC - SWA\_ Senate Bill 852.pdf**

Uploaded by: Riya Gupta

Position: FWA



**Senate Bill 852: Blueprint for Maryland's Future - Alterations**

**Position: Favorable with Amendments**

Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

March 5, 2025

The Blueprint Coalition, a 30+ member organization representing hundreds of thousands of Marylanders and co-led by Strong Schools Maryland and the Maryland State Education Association, is dedicated to complete implementation and funding of the Blueprint for Maryland's Future. We submit this testimony in support of Senate Bill 852, with proposed amendments.

We strongly support provisions in the bill that advance equity and strengthen educational opportunities. Expanding the definition of "Tier I child" for publicly funded prekindergarten (Page 13, Lines 14–27) will ensure children with disabilities and those from multilingual homes have greater access to early education. The study on the impact of National Board Certification (Page 16, Lines 18–30) is essential for understanding its role in improving teacher effectiveness and retention. Likewise, the required study on the adequacy of Maryland's special education funding (Page 17, Lines 1–26) is a necessary step to ensuring students with disabilities receive the support they need.

However, other provisions in the bill raise concerns about equity and implementation of the Blueprint:

- **Waiving Minimum School Funding for Smaller Schools (Page 4, Line 4):** Allowing waivers for schools with 350 or fewer students undermines the guarantee that every student, regardless of school size, receives the necessary resources. Rural and under-enrolled schools often serve high-need student populations, and this change could weaken their funding stability.
- **Post-CCR Pathway Eligibility and FARMs Limitations (Page 14, Line 3 – Page 15, Line 13):** The bill allows county boards to set income eligibility limits for post-college and career readiness (CCR) pathway costs, except for students eligible for Free and Reduced-Price Meals (FARMs). This is particularly concerning because FARMs eligibility has long been criticized as an incomplete measure of financial need. Many families who do not qualify for FARMs still struggle with school-related costs, including lunch. Limiting financial support for CCR pathways based solely on FARMs could create additional barriers for students who need these opportunities to succeed. We urge the General Assembly to adopt a more comprehensive approach to eligibility that accounts for regional cost-of-living variations and recognizes that FARMs alone does not capture the full picture of economic hardship.
- **Limiting AIB Authority Over Collective Bargaining (Page 4, Lines 19–24):** This change is unnecessary because the AIB already has no authority over collective bargaining beyond career ladder provisions. It does not alter existing power dynamics and serves no clear purpose in improving Blueprint implementation.

We urge the Committee to amend Senate Bill 852 to remove these provisions while retaining the essential studies and expanded prekindergarten eligibility. The Blueprint Coalition believes these changes will ensure the bill remains aligned with the goal of providing equitable, high-quality education to all Maryland students. **For these reasons, the Blueprint Coalition respectfully requests a favorable report, with amendments, on Senate Bill 852.**

Please contact Riya Gupta at [riya@strongschoolsmaryland.org](mailto:riya@strongschoolsmaryland.org) for additional questions.



# **SB852 SWA (Written) (1).pdf**

Uploaded by: Riya Gupta

Position: FWA



**Senate Bill 852: Blueprint for Maryland's Future – Alterations**  
**Senate Appropriations and Ways & Means Committees**  
**Position: Support with Amendment**  
March 5, 2025

Strong Schools Maryland is a network of education advocates committed to securing full funding and faithful implementation of the Blueprint for Maryland's Future. Our goal is to ensure every student graduates ready to thrive. We support parts of Senate Bill 852 but recommend significant amendments due to concerns about key provisions.

We strongly endorse elements of the bill that promote equity and improve educational access:

- **Expanded Definition of "Tier I Child"** (Page 13, Lines 14–27): This change broadens eligibility for publicly funded prekindergarten, ensuring children with disabilities and those from multilingual households gain greater access to early education.
- **Study on National Board Certification** (Page 16, Lines 18–30): Evaluating the impact of National Board Certification on teacher effectiveness and retention is critical for strengthening Maryland's educator workforce.
- **Special Education Funding Study** (Page 17, Lines 1–26): Assessing the adequacy of special education funding is a necessary step toward ensuring students with disabilities receive the resources they need.

We propose the elimination of the following provisions in SB 852 as they raise concerns regarding equity and Blueprint implementation:

- **Waiving Minimum School Funding for Smaller Schools** (Page 4, Line 4): The minimum funding requirement ensures that resources follow students. The Blueprint mandates that at least 75% of funding must follow students, with no upper limit on additional resources a school can receive. While schools with fewer than 350 students may appear overfunded, this waiver does not address that issue. Instead, it risks undermining funding equity for high-need student populations.
- **Aggregating Provisions of 5–234 at the School Level** (Page 4, Lines 5–6): Aggregation would make it significantly harder to track whether Blueprint funds are being used as intended. The Blueprint's categorical funding structure ensures resources are targeted to specific priorities. Aggregating expenditures at the school level would obscure whether funds are actually being spent on essential initiatives or being redirected elsewhere. Breaking down expenditures by category is not just a bureaucratic exercise; it is a critical safeguard to ensure funding supports students as intended. Simply showing that money reaches a school does not guarantee it is being spent on the right supports for the students who need them most.
- **Post-CCR Pathway Eligibility and FARMS Limitations** (Page 14, Line 3 – Page 15, Line 13): The bill permits county boards to impose income eligibility limits for post-college and career readiness (CCR) pathway costs, excluding students eligible for Free and Reduced-Price Meals (FARMS). However, FARMS is widely recognized as an incomplete measure of financial need. Many families above the FARMS threshold still struggle with education-related expenses. We urge a broader approach to eligibility that considers regional cost-of-living differences and acknowledges that FARMS alone does not capture the full scope of economic hardship.

- **Limiting AIB Authority Over Collective Bargaining** (Page 4, Lines 19–24): This provision is unnecessary. The AIB already lacks authority over collective bargaining beyond career ladder provisions, making this change redundant and irrelevant to improving Blueprint implementation.

We urge the Committee to amend Senate Bill 852 by removing the provisions that could weaken equity and funding while preserving the essential studies and expanded prekindergarten eligibility. The Blueprint Coalition believes these amendments will help keep the bill aligned with the goal of providing equitable, high-quality education for all Maryland students. **For these reasons, Strong Schools Maryland respectfully requests a favorable report only with major amendments to Senate Bill 852.**

**Please contact** Riya Gupta at [riya@strongschoolsmaryland.org](mailto:riya@strongschoolsmaryland.org) for additional questions.

# **SB0852-EEE\_MACo\_SWA.pdf**

Uploaded by: Sarah Sample

Position: FWA



## **Senate Bill 852**

### *Blueprint for Maryland's Future - Alterations*

MACo Position: **SUPPORT WITH  
AMENDMENTS**

To: Education, Energy, and the Environment  
and Budget and Taxation Committees

Date: March 5, 2025

From: Sarah Sample and Kevin Kinnally

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **SUPPORTS SB 852 WITH AMENDMENTS**. This bill seeks to adjust a number of components of the State's visionary education plan, the Blueprint for Maryland's Future (Blueprint). The provisions of the bill focus broadly on early education, teacher development, college and career readiness, and resource allocation.

The shifts proposed in SB 852 have the potential to come at a time when the Blueprint plan faces an environment dramatically unlike that envisioned during its initial forecasts. The pandemic, labor market, and cost-drivers have altered the underpinning of this landmark effort. County governments have been funding partners, making record-setting financial commitments over three years of the roll-out, with the vast majority of jurisdictions funding well over their local share of Blueprint costs. Even with these historic investments, education experts from across the state have highlighted challenges both operational and financial that could compromise the shared outcomes of the plan. SB 852 presents an opportunity to address some of those obvious and demonstrated challenges. While counties take no issue with the majority of the proposals in the bill, MACo offers some narrow changes to support greater local flexibility and continued accountability.

First, SB 852 seeks to repeal the career counseling programs established between the local board of education, local workforce development board, and the county's community college. Counties strongly agree with the Blueprint that local workforce development boards are best equipped to manage such programs, but one size often does not fit all. While the workforce development boards are the most obvious division to carry out this work, the counties and school boards should be able to exercise some discretion, if for any reason it appears that the current arrangements for these programs are not fulfilling the requirements. To this end, **MACo suggests an amendment to the bill allowing county governments, in agreement with the school board, to exercise the option to move these programs into either the county government or the local school system to carry out the charge with the specified funding.**

Second, there has been a substantial, and in some instances unnecessary, degree of burden that local school systems have endured due to the overly prescriptive nature of Blueprint funding.

Superintendents have made clear that the funding formula and strategy is another one-size-fits-all approach that lacks an understanding and appreciation for the diversity of communities across Maryland. School leaders across the jurisdictions have respectfully requested, and counties echo that request here, to give more flexibility on allocating and reporting funding in certain instances.

**Specifically, an amendment to SB 852 that allows financial reporting to be aggregated at the school level rather than by Blueprint category would ease compliance significantly and maintain the integrity of the mandate that 75% of funding follow students to their schools.**

Third, local school systems have put a great deal of effort into engaging and incentivizing high quality teachers to move to underperforming schools. The obstacles presented in these negotiations are very specific to the individual teachers being asked to make what, in many instances, is a substantial life change for them and their family. It can include changes in commuting, work environments, living situations, family schedules, and the like. Focusing state resources narrowly on national board certification stipends limits available resources to a singular incentive, leaving the school system to explore other avenues without access to corresponding resources. For this reason, **counties believe an amendment to the bill should require the State to explore alternative incentive strategies with accompanying state resources to aid local school systems struggling to encourage teacher movement.**

Fourth, while counties appreciate the willingness to bring the Blueprint into alignment with implementation realities, the expense to taxpayers is still overwhelming. The investments in education must continue to comply with the strictest transparency and accountability standards, especially as progress relates to the changes SB 852 demands. To this end, **counties respectfully request an amendment to the bill to require the Maryland State Department of Education to report annually on the effects of any changes to the Blueprint.**

Significant reforms, as those prescribed by the Blueprint, hold great promise but must be built to last. Course corrections in the face of significant obstacles will serve students, educators, and communities better in the long run. SB 852, with the reasonable changes outlined above, can ensure the reform plan will work for all students, teachers, and school leadership. Accordingly, MACo urges a **FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS** report for SB 852.

# **Amendment to SB0852 Blueprint Adjustments.pdf**

Uploaded by: Senator Karen Lewis Young

Position: FWA



**SB0852/783520/1**

AMENDMENTS  
PREPARED  
BY THE  
DEPT. OF LEGISLATIVE  
SERVICES

17 FEB 25  
19:33:47

BY: Senator Lewis Young  
(To be offered in the Education, Energy, and the Environment  
Committee and the Budget and Taxation Committee)

AMENDMENTS TO SENATE BILL 852

(First Reading File Bill)

AMENDMENT NO. 1

On page 1, strike beginning with “limiting” in line 8 down through “educators,” in line 10; strike beginning with “requiring” in line 15 down through “teachers,” in line 16; in line 21, strike “5–402(a),”; and in line 27, strike “5–402(h),”.

AMENDMENT NO. 2

On page 4, strike in their entirety lines 7 through 31, inclusive.

On page 16, strike in their entirety lines 13 through 30, inclusive; and in line 31, strike “4.” and substitute “2.”.

On page 17, in lines 27 and 31, strike “5.” and “6.”, respectively, and substitute “3.” and “4.”, respectively.



## **March 5 2025 Amendment**

Uploaded by: Senator Karen Lewis Young

Position: FWA



SB0852/573825/1

AMENDMENTS  
PREPARED  
BY THE  
DEPT. OF LEGISLATIVE  
SERVICES

05 MAR 25  
10:50:33

BY: Senator Lewis Young  
(To be offered in the Education, Energy, and the Environment  
Committee and the Budget and Taxation Committee)

AMENDMENTS TO SENATE BILL 852  
(First Reading File Bill)

AMENDMENT NO. 1

On page 1, strike beginning with “repealing” in line 3 down through “funding;” in line 4; in line 11, after “principals,” insert “requiring, beginning in a certain fiscal year, that county boards of education, at minimum, independently provide services under the Career Counseling Program for Middle and High School Students;”; in line 21, strike “5–213(a);”; in line 27, strike “5–213(c);”; and in line 28, after “6–1012,” insert “7–127.”

AMENDMENT NO. 2

On page 2, in line 5, strike “and 7–127”; and strike in their entirety lines 11 through 27, inclusive.

On page 12, in line 18, strike the bracket; in line 31, strike “Each” and substitute “FOR EACH FISCAL YEAR THAT FUNDING IS DISTRIBUTED FROM A COUNTY BOARD TO A LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD IN ACCORDANCE WITH § 5–213(C) OF THIS ARTICLE, EACH”; and in the same line, after “into” insert “OR HAVE IN PLACE”.

On page 13, in line 5, after “agreement” insert “, AS APPLICABLE”; in line 9, strike the bracket; and after line 9, insert:

“(F) (1) SUBJECT TO PARAGRAPH (2) OF THIS SUBSECTION, BEGINNING IN FISCAL YEAR 2027 AND EACH FISCAL YEAR THEREAFTER, EACH COUNTY BOARD SHALL, AT MINIMUM, INDEPENDENTLY PROVIDE SERVICES UNDER THE PROGRAM.

(2) (i) COUNTY BOARDS ARE ENCOURAGED TO PROVIDE SERVICES UNDER THE PROGRAM IN PARTNERSHIP WITH LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARDS.

(ii) IF A COUNTY BOARD PARTNERS WITH A LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD TO PROVIDE SERVICES UNDER THE PROGRAM, A COUNTY BOARD SHALL ENTER INTO A LOCAL CAREER COUNSELING AGREEMENT WITH THE LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD.”.

## **SB0852 Blueprint Adjustments Written Testimony (Co**

Uploaded by: Senator Karen Lewis Young

Position: FWA



THE SENATE OF MARYLAND  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Annapolis Office  
James Senate Office Building  
11 Bladen Street, Room 302  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
410-841-3575  
800-492-7122 Ext. 3575  
Karen.Young@senate.state.md.us

District Office  
253 East Church Street  
Frederick, MD 21701  
301-662-8520

March 5, 2025

Senate Bill 852 - Blueprint for Maryland's Future - Alterations

The Honorable Brian Feldman  
The Honorable Cheryl Kagan  
Education, Energy, & Environment Committee  
Miller Senate Office Building  
11 Bladen Street  
Annapolis, MD 21401

Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and distinguished members of the Committee,

After three years of implementation, we can celebrate early successes, but it is clear that adjustments are needed. The challenges we face require pragmatic solutions to ensure both the sustainability of the Blueprint, the fiscal health of the State, the most importantly, the academic success of our students. This list of recommendations is based on the combined experience of those tasked with implementing the Blueprint for Maryland at the school level: administrators, teachers, and members of boards of education. Together, these recommendations will address implementation challenges, save the State and Local Education Authorities money, and increase local schools' flexibility.

- SB0852 will save Maryland money by reducing the State's share of salary increases for prospective, not current, employees who receive and maintain National Board Certification (NBC). The current state shares are \$8,000; \$7,000; and \$6,000. Under my bill, the State burden would be reduced to \$4,000; \$4,000; and \$3,000 **saving Maryland approximately \$11,000 per NBC teacher per year.**
- This bill will remove Principals and Assistant Principals from the Blueprint Career Ladder. Declassifying Principals as "teachers" would exempt them from teaching time and National Board Certification (NBC) requirements, which are not appropriate benchmarks for their roles. By exempting them from NBC requirements, SB0852 will further reduce the burden on the State. This

adjustment also aligns with the established bargaining structures in school systems, where teachers and administrators are represented by separate units.

- Current statute requires LEAs to report on how funds are spent in eight categories in order to ensure 75% of Foundations funding is following the individual student. LEAs separately file detailed monthly accounting reports with the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE).

SB0852 will allow individual schools to combine the eight categories into an aggregate report to reduce administrative costs and burdens. Aggregate reporting will additionally assist schools by providing flexibility to respond to changes in student demographics. Example: in year 1, a school has two English-language learners. By the time funding is allocated for those two students in year 2, they may have graduated.

- Foundation funding is insufficient to deliver all basic education needs for traditional students and operations of a school. This deficiency is exacerbated in small schools without significant ‘special-populations’ which receive additional funding. With limited budgets, small schools find it nearly impossible to offer the same academic programming and enrichments as larger, more-resourced schools. SB0852 will allow LEAs to request reporting requirement waivers for schools with 350 or fewer students. Waiving requirements will reduce compliance burdens on staff of smaller schools while providing additional flexibility to meet their specific needs.
- Income-eligibility guidelines for College and Career Readiness pathways —such as dual-enrollment, international baccalaureate programming, and career and technology education— will allow LEAs to save money. SB0852 will permit LEAs to develop the guidelines while simultaneously ensuring students that are eligible for free or reduced price lunches are exempt from income-eligibility guidelines.
- While the implementation of the Career Counseling and Readiness provision has been inconsistent, it is important to recognize there have been some successes. The revision in this bill will clarify that the program will continue indefinitely but that LEAs can opt to continue under current provisions or develop their own with the same oversight and reporting requirements. This will provide LEAs the flexibility and tools they need to ensure the funding is invested in our children in the most effective and efficient way possible.

- SB0852 directs MSDE to study how Foundations funding influences the achievement of students with disabilities. It will examine whether funding disbursements align with the needs of disabled students, whether a funding formula that uses multiple weights for special education services is feasible, and whether the cost of student transportation is appropriately reflected in the funding formula.
- Finally, SB0852 will clarify that multilingual learners and special education students are considered Tier 1 students. The Blueprint currently defines a Tier 1 student as a 3 or 4 year old who is homeless or whose family income is less than or equal to 300% of the federal poverty level. This bill will update that definition to include students who have a disability or from a home where English is not the primary spoken language. This is consistent with the intent of the Blueprint, which currently grants students with disabilities and multilingual learners the same prioritization as Tier 1 students, but includes them as separate categories. This technical update will streamline the bill's language and enshrine these students as worthy of the same consideration as current Tier 1 children.

These proposals will save our state money, save local school systems money, and give local administrators the flexibility they need to better implement the Blueprint for Maryland. I urge a **favorable** report.

Sincerely,



Senator Karen Lewis Young

# **SB0852 Howard Co BOE Testimony 030525 for EEE - BI**

Uploaded by: Staff Howard County

Position: FWA





**Board of Education  
of Howard County**

Jolene Mosley, *Chair*

Linfeng Chen, Ph.D., *Vice Chair*

Andrea Chamblee, Esq.

Jennifer Swickard Mallo

Jacky McCoy

Meg Ricks

Antonia Watts

James Obasiolu  
*Student Member*

William J. Barnes  
*Superintendent,  
Secretary/Treasurer*

**Board of Education of Howard County  
Testimony Submitted to the Maryland Senate,  
Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee  
March 5, 2025**

**SB0852: FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS  
Blueprint for Maryland's Future – Alterations**

The Board of Education of Howard County (the Board) supports **Blueprint for Maryland's Future – Alterations** with an amendment to include requirements for the development of regulation and policy by educational oversight bodies.

As local school systems have continued to implement the expansive requirements set forth in the Blueprint for Maryland's Future, SB0852 includes several [proposals offered by the Public School Superintendents' Association of Maryland](#) (PSSAM) in key areas of the law that would benefit from legislative changes. Each of the bill's provisions – spanning from the recognition of multilingual learners and special education students within the definition of Tier I for prekindergarten funding purposes, to changes to the career ladder to align with the established bargaining structures in school systems, to giving local school systems flexibility in the use of funds for career counseling and post-college and career readiness pathways – are supported by the Board as measures to reasonably amend the law without altering the goals of the Blueprint to create a world-class educational system.

Two additional provisions within SB0852 would require state-level studies that could guide future steps in the use of National Board Certification (NBC) and the adequacy of Maryland's special education funding. Critical questions around the effectiveness of NBC in teacher recruitment and student achievement would be addressed through the bill's proposed study. With costs for special education consistently exceeding federal, state, and local funding, the adequacy of those allocations would also be addressed.

As a legislative priority on the Blueprint, and in alignment with PSSAM's recommendations under Pillar 5, the Board supports the addition of a requirement in statewide legislation for the timely development of regulation and policy by education oversight bodies. Such provisions would not only give the State a reasonable timeline for development following the effective date of the bill, but mutually respect workloads by allowing local school systems to implement in the school year following the actual promulgation of regulations. This would address the persistently changing guidance in all areas of the Blueprint and the essential need for planning and execution lead-time to put new practices in place. Regulations allow new policies to be vetted by the public and local school systems. They also allow for a reasonable amount of time to implement initiatives following final adoption of the new regulations.

The Board recommends an amendment specifying that all new legislation should be drafted with a clear distinction between the new law's effective date, the timeline for adoption of new or amended policies aligned with implementation, and the school year in which full implementation is to begin. For initiatives that do not require the promulgation of regulations, oversight bodies should be required to provide guidance and/or reporting templates in draft form six months before it is due, or in final form, no later than four months before a deadline.

With this addition, we urge a FAVORABLE report on SB0852 from this Committee.

# **Aieryanna Riddick Student Letters Opposing SB-852**

Uploaded by: Aieryanna Riddick

Position: UNF

The Honorable Brian Feldman, Chair

Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment

2 West Miller Senate Office Building

Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Senator Feldman,

As a senior in high school, I am looking for opportunities that will help me transition into a meaningful career. One of the most valuable programs I have learned about is Maryland Service Year, which provides students like me the opportunity to shadow different industries after high school. Additionally, through career coaching, I have been informed about various healthcare opportunities that could shape my future. If SB 852 passes, students may no longer receive guidance about these critical resources. Please vote against SB 852 to ensure students continue to have access to these vital career opportunities.

Sincerely,

Aieryanna Riddick

Grade: 12th

Old Mill High School

# **Aisha Hope Opposition to SB 852.pdf**

Uploaded by: Aisha Hope

Position: UNF

Mrs. Aisha J. Hope  
In-School Career Coach  
Anne Arundel Workforce Development Corporation  
8531 Veterans Hwy  
Millersville, Maryland 21108  
ahope@aawdc.org

February 25, 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,

As a Career Coach working directly with Maryland's students, I am writing to express my strong opposition to SB 852, 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 SB 852 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,

Aisha J. Hope  
Career Coach  
Anne Arundel Workforce  
Development Corporation (AAWDC)

## **Aniya Barnes Student Letters Opposing SB-852 (11).**

Uploaded by: Aniya Barnes

Position: UNF

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

Dear Senator Feldman,

As a student preparing for life after high school, I have gained invaluable knowledge from career programs at Old Mill High School. The opportunities provided, such as meeting guest speakers from various fields and attending career expos, have helped me explore different career paths. If it wasn't for my career coach I wouldn't think there were any opportunities for me after High School. My family doesn't have a lot of money for college so learning about these resources from my career coach has potentially set me up for success after high school. If SB 852 passes, these programs may be at risk, leaving students like me without the resources they need to plan for their futures. I urge you to vote against SB 852.

Sincerely,

Aniya Barnes

Grade: 11

Old Mill High School





# **Anthony Vanchieri Student Opposing SB-852 (4).pdf**

Uploaded by: Anthony Vanchieri

Position: UNF

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

Dear Senator Feldman,

Career coaching has given me a sense of direction for my future. I have attended trips to universities and trade schools, met industry professionals, and had hands-on learning experiences that I wouldn't have had otherwise. SB 852 could take away these opportunities for future students, limiting their ability to make informed career choices. Please oppose SB 852 and protect career programs that help students succeed.

Sincerely,

Anthony Vanchieri

Grade:12

Old Mill High School

# **April Smith in Opposition to SB 852.pdf**

Uploaded by: April Smith

Position: UNF

April Smith, MS  
In-School Youth Career Coach  
Anne Arundel Workforce Development Corporation  
613 Global Way, Linthicum, MD 21090  
apsmith@aawdc.org  
February 26, 2025  
The Honorable Brian Feldman, Chair  
Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee  
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,

As a career coach working directly with Maryland's students, I am writing to express my strong opposition to SB 852, 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 SB 852 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,  
April Smith, MS  
Career Coach  
Anne Arundel Workforce Development Corporation

# **Employ Prince George's - SB 852 Testimony - UNF.pd**

Uploaded by: Ardy Kamali

Position: UNF



EMPLOY PRINCE GEORGE'S  
1801 McCormick Drive, Suite 400,  
Largo, Maryland 20774  
www.employpg.org  
(301) 618-8400  
*Walter L. Simmons, President*

---

<b>Bill Number:</b>	Senate Bill 852
<b>Title:</b>	Blueprint for Maryland's Future – Alterations
<b>Committee:</b>	Education, Energy, and the Environment
<b>Hearing Date:</b>	March 5, 2025
<b>Position:</b>	UNFAVORABLE

---

Employ Prince George's, Inc. (EPG) is the principal workforce development entity for the Prince George's County Government, and the staff, fiscal agent, and career services provider for the Prince George's County Workforce Development Board. Employ Prince George's is responsible for regulating policy development, operating the Prince George's County Public Workforce System, and administering all workforce activities related to compliance and workforce development services funded by the Prince George's County Government and the Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act (WIOA).

When the General Assembly passed the landmark Blueprint for Maryland's Future, it recognized that preparing students for career success required collaboration between county boards of education, community colleges, and local workforce development boards. As such, the Blueprint mandated that school systems partner with these entities to provide career counseling services and provided a per-pupil funding benchmark (\$62, adjusted annually for inflation) through Fiscal Year 2026 to support this critical initiative.

Unfortunately, school systems across the state—under guidance from the Public School Superintendents' Association of Maryland (PSSAM)—have willfully misinterpreted this funding mechanism as a temporary “pilot” program, despite no such language appearing in Maryland law or in guidance from the Accountability and Implementation Board (AIB). This mischaracterization has undermined the General Assembly's intent and jeopardized the success of the Career Counseling Program.

Prince George's County provides a glaring example of how school systems have resisted this legislative mandate. From the outset of Blueprint implementation, Prince George's County Public Schools (PGCPS) failed to prioritize Career Counseling under the Blueprint, delayed EPG's access to schools for over 12 months, and failed to make mandatory Blueprint payments that fund the salaries of career coaches and career counseling programs for PGCPS students. These actions ultimately required an AIB-appointed facilitator to intervene, assist EPG to enter local middle and high schools, and mandate that PGCPS make the required payments owed to EPG. These actions demonstrate a blatant disregard for both the law and students who rely on critical workforce development services.

Senate Bill 852 proposes to eliminate the Career Counseling Program entirely, just as its positive effects and success stories are beginning to emerge. Make no mistake, the Career Counseling Program

is one of the most innovative and visionary elements of the Blueprint, one which truly prepares our students for the economy of tomorrow. Beyond the negative effects on career outcomes for our students, this legislation would also result in hundreds of career counselors losing their jobs across Maryland. Most significantly, however, is the fact that this bill would essentially reward school administrators for their blatant disregard of the General Assembly's Blueprint mandate.

The idea that school systems alone are better suited to provide career counseling or adequately prepare students for today's workforce is fundamentally flawed. Workforce development boards play a unique and essential role in career readiness that school systems simply cannot replicate:

1. **Data-Driven Decision Making:** Workforce boards maintain extensive labor market information and industry data to align career counseling with real job opportunities and local career pathways. School systems do not have this expertise.
2. **Employer Connections:** Workforce boards have established relationships with local businesses, ensuring that students gain direct access to potential employers, mentors, and community leaders. School systems do not have these employer relationships and networks.
3. **Career Pathway Tracking:** Workforce boards track individuals beyond high school graduation, providing long-term career pathway support. School systems do not have the infrastructure or desire to do this.
4. **Job Placement and Hiring Events:** Workforce boards regularly host job fairs and hiring events that connect students to immediate employment opportunities. School systems lack the capacity to do so.

SB 852 effectively dismantles a program that has already provided invaluable career support to thousands of students across Maryland. We respectfully urge the committee to report unfavorably on Senate Bill 852 and ensure the Blueprint Career Counseling Program remains a stable, well-funded, and integral part of Maryland's workforce pipeline.

## **Ariana Martin.pdf**

Uploaded by: Ariana Martin

Position: UNF



Ariana N. Martin  
3137 Flanders Court  
Waldorf, MD 20602  
ArianaMartin0526@gmail.com

February 27, 2025

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,

My name is Ariana Martin, and **I am an 11th-grade student** within the Charles County Public Schools System, specifically located in Waldorf, Maryland. I am writing to you today with deep concern regarding the proposed bills, particularly **HB 1245**, that seek to repeal the career counseling law in Maryland, which enables workforce development for middle and high school students.

As a student nearing graduation in 2026, I have experienced firsthand the critical need for effective workforce development and career guidance. **I have not received any college preparation from my high school.** The preparation I received was from my own mother not from the Maryland Public School System - **Receiving emails and announcements with scholarship opportunities and a few rushed visits to college campuses is not considered workforce development nor career counseling. I am 16 and I know that.**

**Career Counselors and Coaches are needed in our schools.** We need to know what careers are out there and how to actually begin preparing for the workforce. I am grateful for our teachers who are preparing me and my peers academically, **but it is not their jobs to prepare us for the workforce – they don't have the experience, knowledge or skills of a Career Coach.** I strongly believe that Workforce Development Career Counselors are essential and need to be present in our schools to provide us with research opportunity, counseling, and support, career mapping and exposure to industry-related fields, and opportunities for us to take advantages of many other programs and services offered by our local Workforce Development staff. **Please, I don't want to graduate high school and not know how to enter the workforce.**

**Repealing career counseling, as proposed in HB 1245, would severely impact disadvantage students like me across Maryland,** particularly those from under-resourced communities, who may not have access to alternative sources of guidance. **I am both Hispanic and African American – I need these services.**

I urge you, Chairman Barnes and Members of the House Appropriations Committee and the Ways & Means Committee, to consider the real-life impact of these proposed bills. **Please vote against HB 1245 and any other legislation that seeks to dismantle the career counseling programs in our schools.**

Thank you for your attention to this critical issue.

Sincerely,

Ariana Martin



Ariana N. Martin  
3137 Flanders Court  
Waldorf, MD 20602  
ArianaMartin0526@gmail.com

February 27, 2025

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,

My name is Ariana Martin, and **I am an 11th-grade student** within the Charles County Public Schools System, specifically located in Waldorf, Maryland. I am writing to you today with deep concern regarding the proposed bills, particularly **HB 1461**, that seek to repeal the career counseling law in Maryland, which enables workforce development for middle and high school students.

As a student nearing graduation in 2026, I have experienced firsthand the critical need for effective workforce development and career guidance. **I have not received any college preparation from my high school.** The preparation I received was from my own mother not from the Maryland Public School System - **Receiving emails and announcements with scholarship opportunities and a few rushed visits to college campuses is not considered workforce development nor career counseling. I am 16 and I know that.**

**Career Counselors and Coaches are needed in our schools.** We need to know what careers are out there and how to actually begin preparing for the workforce. I am grateful for our teachers who are preparing me and my peers academically, **but it is not their jobs to prepare us for the workforce – they don't have the experience, knowledge or skills of a Career Coach.** I strongly believe that Workforce Development Career Counselors are essential and need to be present in our schools to provide us with research opportunity, counseling, and support, career mapping and exposure to industry-related fields, and opportunities for us to take advantages of many other programs and services offered by our local Workforce Development staff. **Please, I don't want to graduate high school and not know how to enter the workforce.**

**Repealing career counseling, as proposed in HB 1461, would severely impact disadvantage students like me across Maryland,** particularly those from under-resourced communities, who may not have access to alternative sources of guidance. **I am both Hispanic and African American – I need these services.**

I urge you, Chairman Barnes and Members of the House Appropriations Committee and the Ways & Means Committee, to consider the real-life impact of these proposed bills. **Please vote against HB 1461 and any other legislation that seeks to dismantle the career counseling programs in our schools.**

Thank you for your attention to this critical issue.

Sincerely,

Ariana Martin





Ariana N. Martin  
3137 Flanders Court  
Waldorf, MD 20602  
ArianaMartin0526@gmail.com

February 27, 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,

My name is Ariana Martin, and **I am an 11th-grade student** within the Charles County Public Schools System, specifically located in Waldorf, Maryland. I am writing to you today with deep concern regarding the proposed bills, particularly **SB 852**, that seek to repeal the career counseling law in Maryland, which enables workforce development for middle and high school students.

As a student nearing graduation in 2026, I have experienced firsthand the critical need for effective workforce development and career guidance. **I have not received any college preparation from my high school.** The preparation I received was from my own mother not from the Maryland Public School System - **Receiving emails and announcements with scholarship opportunities and a few rushed visits to college campuses is not considered workforce development nor career counseling. I am 16 and I know that.**

**Career Counselors and Coaches are needed in our schools.** We need to know what careers are out there and how to actually begin preparing for the workforce. I am grateful for our teachers who are preparing me and my peers academically, **but it is not their jobs to prepare us for the workforce – they don't have the experience, knowledge or skills of a Career Coach.** I strongly believe that Workforce Development Career Counselors are essential and need to be present in our schools to provide us with research opportunity, counseling, and support, career mapping and exposure to industry-related fields, and opportunities for us to take advantages of many other programs and services offered by our local Workforce Development staff. **Please, I don't want to graduate high school and not know how to enter the workforce.**

**Repealing career counseling, as proposed in SB 852 would severely impact disadvantage students like me across Maryland,** particularly those from under-resourced communities, who may not have access to alternative sources of guidance. **I am both Hispanic and African American – I need these services.**

I urge you, Chairman Feldman and Members of the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee and the Budget and Taxation Committee, to consider the real-life impact of these proposed bills. **Please vote against SB 852 and any other legislation that seeks to dismantle the career counseling programs in our schools.**

Thank you for your attention to this critical issue.

Sincerely,

Ariana Martin



# **Opposition Testimony .pdf**

Uploaded by: Ashley Joslyn

Position: UNF

## Honorable Members of the Legislature,

I stand before you today to express my strong support for The Blueprint for Maryland's Future and the critical role of career coaching in our schools. These initiatives are not just investments in education; they are investments in the future workforce, economy, and overall success of our students.

The Blueprint ensures that every student—regardless of income, background, or ability—has access to meaningful education and career pathways. It goes beyond traditional academics by opening doors to real-world opportunities, helping students connect what they learn in the classroom to tangible career success.

Through career coaching, we are giving students the tools to explore their interests, develop essential skills, and make informed decisions about their futures. This program has already made a profound impact:

- We've engaged with over 200 local businesses, bringing real-world professionals into schools to guide students.
- Internship participation has increased in every single high school in the county.
- One student, through career coaching, discovered an interest in pharmacy, secured a job as a pharmacy cashier, and is now on a path to becoming a certified pharmacy technician—before even graduating!
- Workforce development professionals have worked one-on-one with over a third of students in the county's alternative high school, helping those with the greatest barriers to employment build a future.

For the first time in nearly a decade, students in this school will participate in mock interviews, preparing them for real-world job opportunities. This is more than just career exposure—it is empowerment. Students are learning valuable employability skills that will make them strong employees, innovative entrepreneurs, and future leaders.

I urge you to continue supporting *The Blueprint for Maryland's Future* and career coaching programs. Together, we can ensure that every Maryland student has the opportunity to thrive—not just in school, but in life.

Thank you.

Ashley Joslyn

## **Career Counselor Letter and Testimony\_Autumn Meyer**

Uploaded by: Autumn Meyers

Position: UNF

Autumn Meyers  
In-School Career Coach, Northeast High School  
Anne Arundel Workforce Development Corp.  
613 Global Way  
Linthicum Heights, MD 21090  
[ameyers@aawdc.org](mailto:ameyers@aawdc.org)  
February 25th, 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,

My name is Autumn Meyers and I am a high school career coach with Anne Arundel Workforce Development Corporation, serving Northeast High School. Speaking before the Maryland Legislature wasn't exactly on my Bingo card for this year, yet here I am. And to be honest, I'm disappointed my job, my livelihood, is even up for debate.

I was born and raised in Baltimore into a family of blue-collar workers. I didn't come from money; I was brought up to work hard for what I want. Growing up in the city, I saw firsthand how communities struggle without the very resources that are being deliberated today. Many of my peers, lacking guidance and support, have turned to drugs and other means to survive. My family moved to Anne Arundel County for me to have a better education opportunity. I was an honor roll student and attended classes at the Center of Applied Technology North (CATN). Like many millennials, I was told that college was the only path to success, I didn't have a career coach to guide me. So I went to college, ended up switching my major three times and eventually dropped out because I couldn't afford the debt I was building. In desperation, I enlisted in the Army National Guard, believing it would be my way forward. But I couldn't even make it through the basic training.

Without direction, I worked multiple jobs—retail by day, door-to-door sales at night, and physically demanding warehouse jobs that had me climbing ladders and carrying bathtubs on my back while pregnant because I didn't understand my rights as an employee. When I became a single mother, I worked six days a week just to keep a roof over my head. That first winter, I couldn't afford an oil furnace and relied on a space heater and winter coats in my living room. It wasn't until I pursued a welding certification—taking night classes while still working—that I was able to get back on my feet financially. That opportunity gave me the foundation to re-enroll in college and I ultimately earned my bachelor's degree in Human Resources Management.

My work in human resources gave me firsthand experience with various aspects of the workforce, including applicant tracking, background checks and hiring processes. Prior to becoming a career coach, I worked in workforce reentry, helping individuals in Baltimore and DC transition back into society from federal prison. Without these programs, people are lost. I've seen what happens when individuals don't have the guidance and support they need to navigate their careers or to simply keep their bills paid.

I am a living, breathing example of why career workforce counseling is essential in our public schools. My students deserve better than what I had. They deserve to explore careers beyond the pressure of a four-year degree. They deserve to feel confident and prepared for the workforce. Through my career coaching, I've made real impacts—helping students craft resumes, build interview skills and explore non-traditional career paths. One of my students is exploring mental health careers with me to advocate for teen mental health. I've presented my resume workshop in special education classrooms and created an inclusive space where students who are unsure of their futures feel safe and supported. Since starting my role, I have helped hundreds of students with career-centric lessons, group sessions and individual appointments.

And my work doesn't stop in the classroom. My upcoming career fair in March will bring 25+ representatives, including local police and fire departments, the library, hospitals, businesses, the Y of Central Maryland, MD Live Casino, BGE, the military, The Blue Ribbon Project, my career center, and Earlbeck Gases & Technologies—the very place where I earned my welding credentials to get back on my feet.

Do not think for a second that our already overworked school guidance counseling departments are going to take over this initiative. They are already overwhelmed scheduling and working with students with mental health issues who lack the support they need at home.

The impact of the Blueprint for Maryland's Future is critical—not just for my students, but for future generations. We are living in an ever-changing, challenging workforce environment and it is our responsibility to ensure that students have the tools to navigate it successfully. I urge you to recognize the necessity of career workforce counseling in public schools. It is not an option—it is a necessity.

Thank you for your time.

Thank you,

*Autumn Meyers*





# **MWA Letter - Oppose - SB 852.pdf**

Uploaded by: Brandon Butler

Position: UNF

## MWA Members

### **Anne Arundel County**

Anne Arundel Workforce  
Development Corporation  
*Kirkland Murray, Executive Director*

### **Baltimore City**

Mayor's Office of Employment  
Development  
*MacKenzie Garvin, Director*

### **Baltimore County**

Baltimore County Department of  
Economic and Workforce  
Development  
*Jonathan Sachs, Director*

### **Carroll County**

Carroll County Workforce  
Development  
*Heather Lee Powell, Manager*

### **Frederick County**

Frederick County Workforce  
Services  
*Michelle Day, Director*

### **Howard County**

Howard County Office of Workforce  
Development  
*Stephanie Adibe, Director*

### **Lower Shore**

Lower Shore Workforce Alliance  
(Somerset, Wicomico, & Worcester,  
Counties)  
*Leslie Porter-Cabell, Workforce  
Director*

### **Montgomery County**

WorkSource Montgomery, Inc.  
*Anthony Featherstone, Executive  
Director*

### **Prince George's County**

Prince George's County Workforce  
Development Board  
*Walter Simmons, Executive  
Director*

### **Southern Maryland**

Southern Maryland Job Source  
(Calvert, Charles, & St. Mary's  
Counties)  
*Ruthy Davis, Director*

### **Susquehanna Region**

Susquehanna Workforce Network,  
Inc. (Cecil & Harford Counties)  
*Kimberly Justus, Executive Director*

### **Upper Shore**

Upper Shore Workforce Investment  
Board (Caroline, Dorchester, Kent,  
Queen Anne's, & Talbot Counties)  
*Dan McDermott, Interim Executive  
Director*

### **Western Maryland**

Western Maryland Consortium  
(Allegany, Garrett &  
Washington Counties)  
*Amos McCoy, Interim Executive  
Director*

March 3, 2025

Senator Brian Feldman, Chair

Senate Education, Energy & Environment Committee

2 West Miller Senate Office Building

Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Chairman Feldman & Members of the Senate Education, Energy & Environment Committee:

I am writing in strong OPPOSITION of SB 852: Blueprint for Maryland's Future - Alterations.

Maryland's economy depends on a well-prepared, career-ready talent pipeline. SB 852 eliminates that by eliminating the Career Counseling Program for Middle and High School Students. The partnership between local education agencies, workforce development boards, community colleges and businesses is vital to ensuring that students receive relevant career guidance tailored to Maryland's in-demand industries. These collaborations will help address skills gaps, reduce youth unemployment, and align student aspirations with real workforce opportunities.

However, SB 852 eliminates this program even as the first full year of implementation is just now wrapping up. For the sake of students and the future workforce for Maryland's businesses, we are asking you to oppose SB 852's elimination of career counseling for students.

Thank you for your leadership and commitment to Maryland's students and economy. Please do not hesitate to reach out if I can provide additional information or insights on the benefits of this bill.

Sincerely,

Kirkland Murray, President

Maryland Workforce Association

# **Cynthia Whaley Opposition to SB 852.pdf**

Uploaded by: Cynthia Whaley

Position: UNF

Cynthia Whaley  
Career Coach  
Anne Arundell County Workforce Development Corporation  
613 Global Way  
Lithicum, Maryland 21090  
cwhaley@aawdc.org  
February 26, 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,

As a career coach working directly with Maryland's students, I am writing to express my strong opposition to SB 852, 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 SB 852 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,

Cynthia Whaley  
Career Coach  
Lindale Middle School

## **Edward Arnold .pdf**

Uploaded by: Edward Arnold

Position: UNF

Edward Arnold  
Career Coach  
AASCE/AAWDC  
613 Global Way  
Linthicum Heights, MD 21090  
earnold@aawdc.org  
February 27, 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,

As a career coach working directly with Maryland's students, I am writing to express my strong opposition to SB 852, which would eliminate the Career Counseling Program for Middle and High School Students. This program is critical in preparing young people for job readiness, exploring diverse career options, and connecting them with real-world workforce opportunities, employer networks, and in-demand career pathways. Eliminating it would be detrimental to the youth of Maryland, depriving them of crucial support and guidance, as well as to the workforce and economy.

Over the past year, I have had the privilege of working as a career coach at two alternative schools and currently at Meade High School. Through these experiences, I have observed that students, regardless of their school environment, are often unprepared for real-world demands. Career coaching has allowed me to bridge the gap for students who were previously unaware of various career opportunities. This program has been particularly impactful for me, as I see reflections of my own high school experience in the students I work with. As a senior in 2012, I was unaware of the endless opportunities beyond college and had to navigate my future on my own. Fortunately, I successfully attended college and began preparing myself for a career. 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. This issue is bigger than a choice; it will impact the future state, economy, and world. One student can change the world, and imagine if that youth is one who has no access to what this program offers. The potential loss of this program could mean the difference between a student realizing their potential and one who remains unaware of the opportunities available to them.

I urge you to reject SB 852 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,  
Edward Arnold

## **Letter of Opposition (SB 852) - Elizabeth Savage D**

Uploaded by: Elizabeth Savage Dupré

Position: UNF



Elizabeth Savage Dupré, M.Ed.  
Director, In-School Youth Services  
Anne Arundel Workforce Development Corporation  
613 Global Way  
Linthicum, MD 21090  
esavage@aawdc.org  
March 3, 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,

As the director of the career coaching program, Student Career Excellence (SCE), in Anne Arundel County, I am writing to express that I vehemently oppose SB 852, eliminating the middle and high school career counseling program. This program is imperative for preparing young people for their future. As someone who has been deeply invested in the well-being of Maryland's youth for over 20 years, I believe a decision to end the career counseling program would have a detrimental effect on all students, but especially disadvantaged students, who stand to benefit the most from this program and the critical services it provides.

Career counseling programs are instrumental in guiding students through the often-overwhelming transition from school to either the workforce or college. Career counseling offers much-needed support, including awareness of career options, goal-setting, resume-building, interview techniques, and insight into the necessary steps to achieve long-term professional success. For many students, these programs provide the necessary conversations, structure, and encouragement needed to envision and plan for a future that might otherwise seem uncertain, intimidating, or unattainable.

Anne Arundel County's Student Career Excellence program has been in the implementation phase since September 2023. We were only in middle schools for the first year, 2023-24. However, this school year, 2024-25, we have expanded career coaching to the high schools. We do not pigeonhole students into a "one size fits all" box. Career Coaches introduce all the options (e.g., apprenticeships, college, military, entry into the workforce with necessary credentials and certifications) to students, allowing them to explore and discover how their interests, strengths, values, and talents translate and align with specific careers and industries. We engage students in numerous career-centric activities such as career interest surveys, personality tests (e.g., Holland Code), career day events, guest speakers, field trips, and summer camp opportunities to expand their awareness and exposure to careers. ***Anne Arundel County's career coaching program is year-round, not just during the school year.*** We encourage students to apply the information they have learned in the classrooms and schoolhouses to real-world situations to deepen their foundational understanding of careers and how they will eventually integrate into the workforce.

Last summer, Anne Arundel Workforce Development Corporation collaborated with our partner, Anne Arundel Community College, to provide over 100 middle-school students with firsthand learning opportunities about various careers, including culinary arts, entrepreneurship, skilled trades, advanced robotics, and YouTube content creator. Additionally, we sponsored 87 middle and high school students to attend a residential leadership camp where they learned about leadership styles, self-awareness and identity, communication skills, public speaking, ethical decision-making, advocacy, motivation and empowerment, project management, conflict management, and creative problem solving,

Eliminating career counseling programs not only undermines the aspirations of our youth but will also create a void in essential services that can help young people make informed decisions about their education and career paths. Without professional input and guidance from the local workforce boards, many students will struggle to navigate the complexities of the modern job market, which is more competitive and ever-changing than ever before. The lack of dedicated career counseling staff could lead to missed opportunities and, in some cases, a delay in students reaching their full potential.

Furthermore, career counseling programs do more than just inform—they instill confidence. Our programs foster a sense of empowerment and direction that can positively impact a young person's academic and personal life. We help instill a mindset of resilience, perseverance, and adaptability, qualities that are indispensable in today's rapidly evolving world. Career counseling programs are building the future workforce pipeline. We are working to ensure that when students reach the end of their 12th-grade year, they leave with their diploma in one hand, their career plan in the other, and a sense of empowerment to walk confidently into the next phase of their lives and own it.

The career counseling programs are **NOT UGLY**, nor are they **"TRAIN WRECKS,"** as the Public School Superintendents' Association has portrayed them to be. Perhaps, if the public school system would stop with the "superiority complex" and being narcissistic in believing that they can do it better than the local workforce boards, they can do it without the local workforce boards, that they have all the answers, and that it is "their way or no way," then the majority of the career counseling programs around the State would be further along. However, the career counseling programs and the local workforce boards have faced tremendous opposition, defiance, and resistance from the public school system since the beginning. It would benefit the students if the public school system would let go of its defensive posture and learn how to truly partner and be an ally with the local workforce boards.

**The Public School Superintendents' Association is prioritizing money (dollars) over what is genuinely in the best interest of all students in the State of Maryland.**

In light of these considerations, I urge you to reconsider the decision to eliminate this valuable program. By keeping the career counseling program in place, we can ensure that our young people are equipped with the skills, knowledge, and support necessary to thrive in their future careers and contribute to our State's economy.

Thank you for taking the time to read my letter. I welcome the opportunity to share more about how career coaching is positively impacting students across Maryland.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Savage Dupré, M.Ed.  
Director, In-School Youth Services  
Anne Arundel Workforce Development Corporation



## **Gerald Jamison Student Letter Opposing SB-852 (10)**

Uploaded by: Gerald Jamison

Position: UNF

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

Dear Senator Feldman,

I have had the privilege of participating in career programs at my high school, including career expos, field trips to universities, and hands-on experiences at trade schools. These programs have helped me shape my future. I worry that SB 852 will limit access to these crucial resources for students. Please vote against this bill to continue supporting career education initiatives in our schools.

Sincerely,  
Gerald Jamison  
Grade: 11  
Old Mill High School

# **letter supporting career coaching.pdf**

Uploaded by: Ibukun Spe

Position: UNF



Ibukun-Oluwa Ope  
Career Coach  
Susquehanna Workforce Network  
214 Flintstone Dr.  
North East, MD 21901  
ibukunoluwaope@yahoo.com  
2/28/25

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,

As a career coach working directly with Maryland's students, I am writing to about SB 852, 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. 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,

Ibukun-Oluwa Ope



## **Career Counselor Letters - Leilani.pdf**

Uploaded by: Idria Jones- Johnson

Position: UNF

Leilani Jones-Johnson  
AACPS student  
[leilanid.johnson@gmail.com](mailto:leilanid.johnson@gmail.com)

03/02/2025

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 hope this letter finds you well. As a student in Anne Arundel County, I am writing to express my strong opposition to SB 852, which would eliminate the Career Counseling Program for Middle and High School Students. As a student who greatly benefits from the guidance provided by my career coach Ms. Jackson, I strongly believe that eliminating this resource would have a negative impact on students like me.

Career coaching is not just about preparing for a job; it is about helping students understand their interests, strengths, and the possibilities available to them. Many of us enter high school or college without a clear direction or understanding of how to translate our skills and passions into a future career. Career coaches help bridge this gap by providing personalized advice, exploring career paths, and helping us set realistic goals.

Without this support, students may struggle to navigate the overwhelming number of career options, leading to confusion and uncertainty. Many students, including myself, rely on career coaches to help make informed decisions about which courses to take, internships to pursue, and potential job opportunities to consider. Career coaching offers valuable insight into the skills and qualifications required for various professions, as well as the changing demands of the job market. This information is crucial as we make choices that will affect our futures.

Furthermore, career coaches provide a much-needed emotional support system. The pressure to succeed academically while also planning for a career can be daunting. Career coaches offer a safe space to discuss our aspirations and fears, ensuring that we don't feel alone in the process. They also help with resume writing, interview preparation, and networking, all of which are critical skills that are often not taught in the classroom.

Removing career coaching would not only disadvantage students by denying us access to these important resources, but it could also amplify inequalities. Students who do not have the same level of parental support or outside resources would be especially harmed, as career coaches often help level the playing field for those who may not have the same exposure to professional opportunities.

In conclusion, career coaching is an essential service that supports students in developing a clear vision for their future. Without it, many students like me would face even more challenges in navigating the complex transition from school to career. I urge you to reconsider any plans to remove these services, as they are vital to our success.

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 SB 852 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,

Leilani Jones-Johnson



# **Career Counselor Letters Bill 852- Idria.pdf**

Uploaded by: Idria Jones- Johnson

Position: UNF

Idria Jones-Johnson  
AACPS Student  
driaschildcareservice@gmail.com

3/2/25

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,

As a student in Anne Arundel County, I am writing to express my strong opposition to SB 852, which would eliminate the Career Counseling Program for Middle and High School Students. This program is important for students in Maryland, as it supports students' career choices and gives opportunities to better help them in working towards ones career. Career coaches connect students to real world opportunities connecting them too workforce opportunities, Career fairs, and in-demand jobs such as Hospitality, IT, Transporatation, Construction and Health in AAC, as we have come to know it as (HITCH). Eliminating career coaches would be a step backward for all Maryland students, workforce, and our economy.

As a student, I see career coaches working with students to better their understanding of career opportunities. Career coaches help students find the job in that exact career cluster by having students do a career test on Pathful. The results gave students a career match from the test. If it weren't for this test then I would never have known what type of nurse I want to be when I grow up, which is a nurse practitioner for pediatrics. There are so many jobs in a career, sometimes students don't know what exact job they want to do, but career coaches help them understand and choose the job that is in our best interest as a student.

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 SB 852 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,

Idria Jones-Johnson

Old Mill Middle North School

# **Kaiyanna Rogers Opposing SB-852 (8).pdf**

Uploaded by: Kaiyanna Rogers

Position: UNF



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

Dear Senator Feldman,

The career programs at my school have opened my eyes to new possibilities. Because of the field trips and guest speakers our career coach has arranged, I now have a clear direction for my future. If SB 852 passes, many students will lose access to these valuable experiences. I ask you to oppose this bill to ensure that future students continue to benefit from career education programs.

Sincerely,  
Kaiyanna Rogers  
Grade: 12  
Old Mill High School

# **Baltimore's Promise Testimony - SB852 - 2025.pdf**

Uploaded by: Kate Wolfson

Position: UNF

## Board of Directors

Franklyn D. Baker  
President & CEO  
United Way of Central Maryland

John Brothers  
President  
T. Rowe Price Foundation

Ronald Daniels  
President  
Johns Hopkins University

Tisha Edwards  
Secretary of Appointments  
Office of the Governor of Maryland

Matthew Gallagher\*  
President & CEO  
Goldseker Foundation

Mary Beth Haller  
Acting Commissioner  
Baltimore City Health Department

Lisa Lawson\*  
President & CEO  
The Annie E. Casey Foundation

Danista E. Hunte  
Executive Director  
Child First Authority

Bruce E. Jarrell  
President  
University of Maryland, Baltimore

Anthony L. Jenkins  
President  
Coppin State University

Carim V. Khouzami  
President & CEO  
Baltimore Gas and Electric Company

Alysia Lee  
President  
Baltimore Children & Youth Fund

Mark Lerner  
Founding Partner  
Blanket Fort Foundation

Brian D. Pieninck  
President & CEO  
CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield

Sonja Santelises  
CEO  
Baltimore City Public Schools

Shanaysha Sauls  
President & CEO  
Baltimore Community Foundation

The Honorable Brandon M. Scott  
Mayor  
City of Baltimore

David Wilson  
President  
Morgan State University

\* Current co-chairs of the  
Baltimore's Promise Board of Directors.

Chief Executive Officer: Julia Baez

## Written Testimony in Opposition to Senate Bill 852

### Submitted to the Maryland Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

March 5, 2025

Chairperson Feldman, Vice Chairperson Kagan, and Members  
of the Committee,

I am Kate Wolfson, representing Baltimore's Promise, a collective impact organization dedicated to improving career pathways for young people in Baltimore through initiatives like CareerBound, which is on target to put more than 8,300 youth on the path to economic self-sufficiency by 2030. I submit this testimony in strong **opposition to Senate Bill 852**, which repeals the Career Counseling Program for Middle and High School Students and the associated funding.

Career counseling is a **critical bridge between education and employment**, helping students make informed decisions about their futures. The current framework ensures that students receive **individualized career guidance**, access to **high-quality apprenticeships**, and exposure to **diverse career opportunities** that align with Maryland's workforce needs. **Repealing these provisions, as proposed in SB852, would remove a vital support system for students across the state.**

In the past six months of the current school year, **Baltimore Career Coaching Initiative has connected with more than 17,000 Baltimore City youth, providing individualized career coaching to youth in grades 6-12 in 115 Baltimore City Public Schools, helping students to better identify, explore, and plan for their post-secondary career aspirations.** At Baltimore's Promise, we have seen firsthand how effective career counseling benefits young people:

- **Our first school-to-apprenticeship student** was identified, met all readiness requirements for an adult apprenticeship, and has begun his path to a sustainable career.

- **Paid internships with the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA)** provided students at Edmondson-Westside High School with hands-on experience and direct pathways into transportation careers; youth voice is now contributing to the red line project as a result.
- **CareerBound partners with local employers and the workforce development board** to ensure students receive **mentorship, work-based learning, and access to living-wage jobs** upon graduation.

By dismantling existing career counseling infrastructure, SB852 would disproportionately harm students from **historically underserved communities** who rely on these programs for economic mobility.

We also encourage **collaboration among workforce boards and school systems statewide** to develop a **coordinated approach** that strengthens career counseling rather than dismantling it. **Baltimore City has been an exemplar for career counseling**, demonstrating the early success that deep collaboration has produced between the Mayor's Office of Employment Development, Baltimore City Public Schools, and Baltimore City Community College.

For these reasons, we respectfully urge an **unfavorable** report on SB852.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,  
Kate E. Wolfson, Esq.  
Director, CareerBound  
Baltimore's Promise

# **MWA Letter - Oppose - SB 852.pdf**

Uploaded by: Kirkland Murray

Position: UNF

### **MWA Members**

#### **Anne Arundel County**

Anne Arundel Workforce  
Development Corporation  
*Kirkland Murray, Executive Director*

#### **Baltimore City**

Mayor's Office of Employment  
Development  
*MacKenzie Garvin, Director*

#### **Baltimore County**

Baltimore County Department of  
Economic and Workforce  
Development  
*Jonathan Sachs, Director*

#### **Carroll County**

Carroll County Workforce  
Development  
*Heather Lee Powell, Manager*

#### **Frederick County**

Frederick County Workforce  
Services  
*Michelle Day, Director*

#### **Howard County**

Howard County Office of Workforce  
Development  
*Stephanie Adibe, Director*

#### **Lower Shore**

Lower Shore Workforce Alliance  
(Somerset, Wicomico, & Worcester,  
Counties)  
*Leslie Porter-Cabell, Workforce  
Director*

#### **Montgomery County**

WorkSource Montgomery, Inc.  
*Anthony Featherstone, Executive  
Director*

#### **Prince George's County**

Prince George's County Workforce  
Development Board  
*Walter Simmons, Executive  
Director*

#### **Southern Maryland**

Southern Maryland Job Source  
(Calvert, Charles, & St. Mary's  
Counties)  
*Ruthy Davis, Director*

#### **Susquehanna Region**

Susquehanna Workforce Network,  
Inc. (Cecil & Harford Counties)  
*Kimberly Justus, Executive Director*

#### **Upper Shore**

Upper Shore Workforce Investment  
Board (Caroline, Dorchester, Kent,  
Queen Anne's, & Talbot Counties)  
*Dan McDermott, Interim Executive  
Director*

#### **Western Maryland**

Western Maryland Consortium  
(Allegany, Garrett &  
Washington Counties)  
*Amos McCoy, Interim Executive  
Director*

March 3, 2025

Senator Brian Feldman, Chair

Senate Education, Energy & Environment Committee

2 West Miller Senate Office Building

Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Chairman Feldman & Members of the Senate Education, Energy & Environment Committee:

I am writing in strong OPPOSITION of SB 852: Blueprint for Maryland's Future - Alterations.

Maryland's economy depends on a well-prepared, career-ready talent pipeline. SB 852 eliminates that by eliminating the Career Counseling Program for Middle and High School Students. The partnership between local education agencies, workforce development boards, community colleges and businesses is vital to ensuring that students receive relevant career guidance tailored to Maryland's in-demand industries. These collaborations will help address skills gaps, reduce youth unemployment, and align student aspirations with real workforce opportunities.

However, SB 852 eliminates this program even as the first full year of implementation is just now wrapping up. For the sake of students and the future workforce for Maryland's businesses, we are asking you to oppose SB 852's elimination of career counseling for students.

Thank you for your leadership and commitment to Maryland's students and economy. Please do not hesitate to reach out if I can provide additional information or insights on the benefits of this bill.

Sincerely,

Kirkland Murray, President

Maryland Workforce Association

# **Career Counselor Letters - Leslynnne.pdf**

Uploaded by: La-Toya Jones

Position: UNF

Leslynn Miller  
[granma5lm@outlook.com](mailto:granma5lm@outlook.com)

March 01, 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,

As a grandmother to two AACPS students, I am writing to express my strong opposition to SB 852, 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 grandmother I have watched my grandchildren excitement as they work with the career coaches, in their schools. This work with students, employers, and educators helps 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 SB 852 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,

Leslynne Miller

Grandmother of two AACPS Students

# **Career Counselor Letters La-Toya.pdf**

Uploaded by: La-Toya Jones

Position: UNF

La-Toya Jones  
Assistant Program Director  
Anne Arundel Workforce Development Corporation  
613 Global Way  
Linthicum, MD, 21090  
[ljones@aawdc.org](mailto:ljones@aawdc.org) / [lnjones0525@outlook.com](mailto:lnjones0525@outlook.com)

March 2, 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,

As an assistant program director for career coaches working directly with Maryland's students, I am writing to express my strong opposition to SB 852, 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.

Career coaching is an invaluable resource in Maryland, helping students become career-ready. During the 2023-2024 school year, I had the privilege of serving as a career coach for middle school students, contributing to the inaugural year of middle school career coaching. This experience allowed me to build strong relationships with students, families, and the broader school community.

As a career coach, I am also a mother of two children who attend schools within the Old Mill Cluster. This dual role has given me a unique perspective on advocating not only for my own children but also for other students in our community who may not have a voice or someone to advocate for them. I recognize the barriers that exist, preventing students from exploring their passions and pursuing their dreams. For many, the question "What do you want to be when you grow up?" has lost its spark. This once-exciting question is now clouded by societal barriers, misinformation, and discouraging voices that stifle student dreams. Career coaching helps restore that spark, allowing students to once again envision their futures and understand that their dreams are achievable. Through mentorship, career exploration, and development, career coaching connects students with the resources and guidance they need to make their aspirations a reality. Ultimately, career coaching provides a safe space for students to rediscover what they

have been led to believe is impossible, helping them dream big and know that their dreams are within reach.

As career coaches, we work collaboratively with school staff, students, and their families to drive transformational changes. Our support extends beyond students, as we also empower families by connecting them to valuable opportunities through the Anne Arundel Workforce Development Corporation—opportunities that have the potential to impact entire generations. Many families would not have been aware of these resources if it weren't for the efforts of career coaches in bringing them to light. In just 1.5 years of service, students have already expressed the significant impact career coaching has had on their lives. They are beginning to connect the dots about what their future might look like after high school graduation and how to attain successful outcomes. Through career coaching, we hope to help families and students break down systemic barriers and inspire them to dream again. Our goal is to uplift communities by providing them with knowledge about the evolving workforce and the tools they need to succeed.

Collaborating with my school team was absolutely essential to my success. I am incredibly grateful that my principal was always supportive and open to new ideas—he never once discouraged me or said "no." His encouragement played a major role in the success of my first year as a career coach. During the 2023-2024 school year, I had the opportunity to facilitate a range of impactful activities, including a three-week career day, resume-building workshops, life skills training, guest speakers, alumni presentations from a nearby high school, and so much more. The success of the year can be attributed to the collective belief in the power of these initiatives and the commitment to making a real impact.

As an Assistant Program Director in the second year of Maryland's Blueprint for Education, I continue to witness career coaches innovatively guiding students in middle and high school. In middle schools, career coaches collaborate with school counselors to share valuable career information and prepare students for the career pathways available in their network schools by offering career centric activities in classrooms and throughout the day. In high school, career coaches are addressing missed opportunities from middle school, ensuring that students are aware of the resources and possibilities they may not have known about earlier. Our high school career coaches continue to develop career plans with students, so that when they conclude their senior year, they are making more informed career decisions and plans. It is important that these students are answering to the needs of the workforce and have the employable skills that employers are looking for in the 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> century.

The partnerships within school communities are growing stronger as educators and staff come to realize how the Blueprint benefits and impacts students, rather than taking away from them. One crucial aspect that has often been overlooked is the fact that some students are not interested in pursuing college. The message that it's okay not to follow a traditional college path has often

been missed, but career coaches are helping to shift that narrative. There are countless career pathways that can lead students to success—many of which don't require a four-year degree. This is the transformational work career coaches are doing every day: inspiring, motivating, and helping students align their academic efforts with their career aspirations. As students begin to understand their own journey, we hope it leads to more successful outcomes not only in the workforce, but their lives. We envision a future where students graduate without the burden of debt, armed with degrees and skills that allow them to live the life they've dreamed of. Ultimately, this work empowers families to progress, breaking free from societal systems that too often create barriers to advancement. Career coaching is helping to build a future where students and families can thrive, not regress.

Parenting two teenagers is no easy task, but having the support of career coaches who speak my teens' language has been a game-changer. It's amazing how they seem to listen when someone else says the exact same thing I do! Thanks to my daughter's career coach, she's explored incredible opportunities and has applied to many of them. She's learned the value of paid internships and apprenticeships through their shared journey of career discovery. Without her career coach guiding her, she wouldn't have connected with the professional who is now offering her an opportunity in the veterinary field. My youngest daughter has explored a variety of interests but has always known she wanted to work within the STEM and political fields. Thanks to her career coach, she has been able to explore nursing and activism, expanding her horizons in ways I couldn't have imagined. As an educated parent, I know there are gaps in my knowledge, and I've realized I don't always know what I don't know. Career coaches have filled that gap. They've been a vital part of my support system, and now that they're here, I can't imagine doing this journey without them.

Career coaching has been a true blessing—an answer to my prayers. So, when the superintendent association refers to us as a "train wreck," I can't help but reflect on the "train wreck" they are perpetuating by insisting they have all the answers. Their refusal to embrace innovative ideas from others and their lack of willingness to role-model such behaviors stand in stark contrast to the vision of a thriving, forward-thinking community. We are forced to confront the unfortunate reality where students are pushed toward college paths they do not want to take, often leading to discouraging and unrealistic outcomes. At the same time, we risk losing the diversity needed to strengthen our workforce, especially in the trades, a sector vital to our success. Without prioritizing trades, we risk stagnation and regression, unable to advance as a society or nurture the very elements that strengthen and sustain our communities.

Students deserve the opportunity to pursue their dreams without an education system that restricts their choices or eliminates the professionals who guide them in making informed, strength-based decisions. Career coaches are essential in building a future where students are empowered, not limited by outdated systems. As a career coach and assistant program director, 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 SB 852 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,

La-Toya Jones  
Assistant Program Director  
Anne Arundel Workforce Development Corporation

# **Liz Ogudugu in Opposition to SB 852.pdf**

Uploaded by: Liz Ogudugu

Position: UNF

Liz Ogudugu  
Career Coach  
Anne Arundel Workforce Development Corporation  
613 Global Way  
Linthicum, MD 21090  
LOgudugu@aawdc.org

02/25/2025

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,

As a career coach working directly with Maryland's students, I am writing to express my strong opposition to SB 852, 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 SB 852 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,

Liz P. Ogudugu  
Career Coach  
Anne Arundel Workforce Development Corporation



## **Student Leter to career coach.pdf**

Uploaded by: Malik Self

Position: UNF

Elyssia Wallace

Southern High School

### Letter to Career Coach

My Career Coach is helping because the things that I was doing before in school were horrible. Working with Mr. Self has helped me realize that in the real world you won't be able to fight everyone you see because you will end up in jail or dead. Mr. Self helped me in school with getting my work done on time before having any fun. A way that helps me stay on track is with a timer so that I can stay focused. Something that Mr. Self also told me was that if I want to go to college, I need to keep my grades up and turn in all my work and not disrespect teachers. This will help me succeed and help me graduate. Before Mr. Self got here, I did not see Graduated in my future. I learned from Mr. Self that the real world is not how it is in school. Having Mr. Self here will help me stay on track and help me get ready for the real world without struggles. Also, everything that he has taught me I can provide the same information to younger kids to also help them in life.

# **Speech on the Importance of Career Coaching in Sch**

Uploaded by: Marissa Heuer

Position: UNF

Marissa Heuer  
Career Coach  
Anne Arundel Workforce Development Corporation  
613 Global Way Linthicum, MD 21090  
mheuer@aawdc.org  
March 3, 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

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.

# **Maureen Wambui - Testimony in Opposition to Senate**

Uploaded by: Maureen Wambui

Position: UNF

Maureen Wambui

7827 Rolling View Ave, Nottingham, MD, 21236

Maureen.w.m.2030@gmail.com

03/03/2025

The Honorable Members of the Senate Committee

Maryland General Assembly, Annapolis, MD 21401

**Testimony in Opposition to Senate Bill 852 (SB0852) with recommendations - Blueprint for Maryland's Future - Alterations**

Hearing Date: March 05, 2025

Chairperson and Esteemed Members of the Committee,

My name is Maureen Wambui, and I am a proud Immigrant, Parent, Community advocate and resident of Legislative District 8 in Maryland. I am testifying today in **strong opposition with recommendations** to Senate Bill 852 with recommendations, as it poses significant risks to immigrant students, low-income communities, and equitable access to quality education across Maryland.

**Reasons for Opposition:**

**Repealing the Career Counseling Program Hurts Vulnerable Students**

SB0852 proposes to eliminate the Career Counseling Program, a critical resource for students especially those from immigrant and low-income backgrounds, who often lack access to career guidance at home. Without this program:

- Many first-generation students will struggle to navigate career pathways, college applications, and vocational training opportunities.
- Low-income and immigrant students, who may not have parental guidance on post-secondary education, will face additional disadvantages in preparing for the workforce.
- Maryland will risk increasing the education-to-unemployment gap for historically underserved communities.

Instead of repealing career counseling, the program should be expanded with multilingual counselors, financial aid guidance, and partnerships with businesses, trade schools, and community colleges.

**Prekindergarten Access Must Be More Inclusive**

While the bill expands eligibility for Tier I prekindergarten, it does not address barriers faced by low-income families, such as:

- Lack of language access and outreach programs to inform non-English-speaking parents about available pre-K programs.
- Transportation challenges that prevent many low-income families from enrolling their children in early education.
- A shortage of bilingual educators and culturally responsive teaching methods to support English Language Learners (ELLs).

The bill should include targeted outreach programs, funding for pre-K transportation, and hiring bilingual teachers to ensure greater equity in early childhood education.

### **School Funding Transparency Must Prioritize Low-Income Schools**

The bill requires county boards to report school funding allocations, yet it does not mandate an equitable distribution model. Schools with higher low-income populations often lack the same level of funding, leading to disparities in:

- Access to updated learning materials, technology, and extracurricular programs.
- Student support services, such as mental health counselors and tutoring programs.
- Resources to address the needs of ELL and special education students.

The bill should require a needs-based funding model and community input sessions to ensure funds are fairly allocated to the most underserved schools.

### **Lack of Support for English Language Learners (ELLs)**

Maryland has a growing number of ELL students, yet SB0852 does not allocate resources to improve language support services. Without additional investment in ESL programs:

- ELL students may fall behind due to insufficient classroom support.
- Schools may lack trained ESL teachers to meet the demand for bilingual instruction.
- Immigrant families may struggle to engage in their children's education due to language barriers.

The bill should increase ESL funding, expand dual-language programs, and provide teacher training in culturally responsive instruction.

### **Eliminating Career Counseling Weakens Workforce Pathways**

Without career counseling, students, especially those in underserved communities—will struggle to access vocational training, apprenticeships, and workforce development programs. The

removal of this program directly contradicts Maryland's goal of preparing students for high-demand industries and economic self-sufficiency.

Instead of cutting the program, Maryland should strengthen vocational education, increase scholarships for trade schools, and create internship opportunities for low-income students.

SB0852, as currently written, undermines the educational success of immigrant students, low-income families, and English Language Learners. While there are positive aspects of the bill, it needs major revisions to prevent harm to Maryland's most vulnerable students.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the committee to reject SB0852 in its current form and amend it to prioritize equity, access, and support for all students.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

Maureen Wambui



# **Molly Evans Opposition to SB 852 .pdf**

Uploaded by: Molly Evans

Position: UNF

Molly Evans  
In-School Career Coach  
Anne Arundel Workforce Development

613 Global Way  
mevans@aawdc.org  
February 26, 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,

As a current in-school career coach working directly with AACPS students and a former classroom teacher, I am writing to express my strong opposition to SB 852, which would eliminate the Career Counseling Program for secondary 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 not just Maryland's students but for our workforce and economy.

In our rapidly changing world, it is more imperative than ever to ensure that students are adequately prepared with the skills and experiences they need to successfully transition out of high school and into the workforce and/or higher education. I believe that removing this program would be a grave disservice to all hard and meaningful work that Maryland has done to eliminate the achievement gap and provide equitable and valuable education to all students. This will negatively impact not just our schools and students; this program provides resources, opportunities, and a bridge to workforce development for our families and communities as well.

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 meaningful 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 SB 852 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,

Molly Evans  
In-School Career Coach  
Anne Arundel Workforce Development

# **TestimonyforMGA.pdf**

Uploaded by: Nancy Jackson

Position: UNF

March 3, 2025

Written Testimony for the Maryland General Assembly in reference to HB 1461, HB 1245, SP852:

The purpose of my written testimony is to support the current AASCE Career Coach positions in the Anne Arundel County Public Schools (middle & high). As the current School & Community Liaison in the College Career Center at Severna Park High School, I have worked directly with Marissa Heuer, an AASCE Career Coach.

Ms. Heuer works collaboratively with several different departments to provide career exploration and support for all our students. The comprehensive curriculum timeline allows the career coach to have multiple touchpoints with every student in every grade. During these visits, she successfully shares and encourages students to seek out the many resources within our school available to them. This in-person interaction is critical in our schools to provide all students with information on who, what, and where they can get support in navigating their next steps to a promising career future. Ms. Heuer not only provides career preparation through classes, small groups, and individual student meetings, she actively connects students with other programs and staff throughout the school and community.

These monthly meetings with the College Career Readiness team allow us to share and collaborate throughout departments (AVID, Counseling, College Career Center, Classroom Teachers, Signature, Work Based Learning, and Career Technical Education). This monthly meeting to brainstorm and share encourages great partnership with colleagues. In turn the students benefit from a wide range of integrated experiences and opportunities supported by the different departments.

I strongly support this invaluable program for our incredible AACO students. My position is unfavorable for the following bills: HB 1461, HB 1245, SP852.

Thank you for your consideration,

Nancy Jackson  
School and Community Liaison  
College Career Center  
Severna Park High School  
410-544-0900  
Ngjackson@aacps.org

# **Nasir Haye Student Letters Opposing SB-852 (1).pdf**

Uploaded by: Nasir Haye

Position: UNF

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

Dear Senator Feldman,

My name is Nasir Haye, a senior at Old Mill High School. I am writing to express my strong opposition to SB 852, as it threatens the invaluable career coaching services that have been pivotal in shaping my future.

As a first-generation American with roots in Jamaica, and raised by a single mother unfamiliar with the educational and vocational opportunities available in the U.S., I faced significant challenges in navigating my career path. Fortunately, our school's career coach dedicated time and effort to understand my interest in electrical engineering. They introduced me to professionals in the field, facilitating connections that led to potential apprenticeship opportunities. These apprenticeships are a critical step toward obtaining certification and embarking on a career as an electrician.

Programs like the Electrical Apprenticeship at Howard Community College, recognized by the Apprenticeship and Training Program Councils in Maryland, Virginia, and Washington, D.C., offer structured pathways for students like me to gain hands-on experience and formal education in the electrical trade.

The guidance and support I received were instrumental in bridging the gap between my aspirations and the resources necessary to achieve them. Eliminating the Career Counseling Program, as proposed in SB 852, would deny future students access to personalized guidance essential for discovering and pursuing their career interests.

I urge you to consider the profound impact that career coaches have on students, especially those from backgrounds similar to mine. Please vote against SB 852 to ensure that all students continue to receive the support they need to succeed.

Sincerely,

Nasir Haye

12th Grade

Old Mill High School

## **Career Counselor Letters- R Albaugh (1).pdf**

Uploaded by: Rachael Albaugh

Position: UNF

Rachael Albaugh  
Career Coach  
Anne Arundel Workforce Development Corporation  
613 Global Way  
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:

“

---

**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]

# **Career Counselor Letters - R Lambert - AAWDC.pdf**

Uploaded by: Renee Lambert

Position: UNF

Renee Lambert  
Career Coach  
Anne Arundel Workforce Development Corporation  
613 Global Way  
Linthicum, MD 21090  
rlambert@aawdc.org  
March 3, 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,

Good afternoon, my name is Renee Lambert and I am testifying today in opposition of House Bill 1245 Repealing the Career Counseling Program for Middle and High School Students.

Workforce development is a crucial part of our nation's framework as it equips and readies jobseekers with awareness, knowledge and preparation needed to thrive and progress in their lives and careers and helps bolster local employee pools and strengthen our economies. That being said, the integration of workforce development into schools has become essential and imperative to prepare our students with the skills to be successful in post-secondary education and the workforce alike.

More and more students are realizing that college is not a viable option for them for many reasons and after graduating high school, are just not equipped with the skills needed to successfully enter the workforce and establish longevity in a potential career path. I currently work in a middle school and in my position, I work directly with students, their educators and other schoolhouse supports and allies to increase students' exposure to career exploration and life skills.

Before working in a school setting, I worked under the WIOA program directly with emerging adults aged 18-24. I have had countless experiences with numerous young people that lacked direction, motivation, knowledge, self-awareness, career awareness, and crucial life and employability skills. I worked with them to identify their needs and wants and assisted them in creating an achievable employment plan that ultimately led to a goal of potential long-term employment. Working with young adults helped me to understand just how vital it is to prepare and arm our young people much earlier in their educational journeys and to provide them with the exposure to and awareness of the endless opportunities available to them while helping them begin to determine their post-secondary paths before they are faced with certain life challenges at which point some options become increasingly limited. Often because they had no idea that certain options could be available to them, **OR** how to make those options a tangible reality.

I now work in a school that is designated as Title 1 and because of the life challenges that many of our students are facing, they often do not have the necessary support in place of allies that help them see beyond their present situation and encourage them to realistically consider their futures because we are often in crisis and survival mode dealing with every day concerns and challenges. I understand today that in-school career coaching is essential in aiding educators and counselors with identifying and closing the gaps that keep many of our students from realizing and maximizing their potential. Some might think that resources are wasted on students at the middle school level by introducing career exploration while they are not necessarily future-minded. My perspective is that we need to get them future-minded and help provide our students with the motivation and awareness to meet the goals they are learning to set for themselves.

The repeal of career coaching would be a disservice to our students who do not know what they do not know and are already faced with limiting beliefs about themselves and their abilities to succeed. As a career coach, my work is both impactful and important to help my students know their options and to not only learn different paths and avenues to success but also to believe in themselves and their abilities enough to follow-through on the path that they choose. We all know and can agree that counselors and teachers cannot do everything for every student with the mounting pressures that are on all of the plates that they are already juggling. Having career coaches in the school houses aids school staff with the many hats they already wear to ensure that our students are not overlooked but instead have additional support to help them achieve the standard of college and career readiness.

Our work is necessary, impactful and will help strengthen our state's future in ways that cannot and should not be overlooked by this potential repeal. Our children are our future, and we should be looking for every way possible to add to the assurance of their success, not detract from it. Thank you for your time and your consideration.

Sincerely,

Renee Lambert  
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]



# **SB0852 Career Day Development Testify .pdf**

Uploaded by: Roshaun Osborn

Position: UNF



Mrs. Roshaun Osborn  
Career Coach  
StrongCurvyFit/Anne Arundel Workforce  
Development Corporation  
537 Marc Road  
Millersville, MD 21108  
Roshauno@gmail.com  
3.3.2025

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,

As a Career Coach, Small Business Owner and Parent  
working directly with Maryland's students, I am writing to  
express my strong opposition to SB 852, 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 backwards 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 SB 852 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.



As BOTH a Mom and Small Business Owner, education and opportunities are vital to opening doors for the next generation of minds. It is critical that our children and young adults make a connection between education and all the careers that are available to them. As a young child, I was encouraged to thrive through education from the working professionals in my own family, which include: Retired P.A.'s, Head Nurses, Educators, Nuclear Physicists, Postal Workers, Government Workers, Mail Carriers, All Branches of the Military and Paralegals. Due to early nurturing of education and career development, I earned a partial scholarship in Elementary School and became a Nationally Certified Personal Trainer and Kettlebell Coach.

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,

**Roshaun A. Osborn**  
**StrongCurvyFit/Anne Arundel Workforce**  
**Development Corporation**  
**Certified Personal Trainer, Kettlebell Coach & Sole Proprietor**  
**301-751-3143**

## **Ruben Villarreal SB-852 (2).pdf**

Uploaded by: Ruben Villarreal

Position: UNF

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

Dear Senator Feldman,

As a high school student exploring my future, I have greatly benefited from career programs at Old Mill High School. Our career coach has provided us with career expos, guest speakers, and field trips that have allowed me to connect with professionals and explore career paths I never knew existed. SB 852 threatens to reduce these invaluable experiences for students. I ask that you vote against this bill to ensure future students continue to have access to these life-changing opportunities.

Sincerely,

Ruben Villarreal

Grade: 11th

Old Mill High School

# **SB852 Blueprint Letter FINAL.pdf**

Uploaded by: Sharita Ali

Position: UNF

Sharita Ali  
Anne Arundel County Workforce Development  
1410 Sacramento St.  
Upper Marlboro, MD 20774  
Sharitaeali@aacps.org

02/03/2025

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,

My name is **Sharita Ali**, and I am proud to be **Central Middle School's Cobra Career Coach since November 2023**. As a career coach working directly with Maryland's students, I am writing to express my strong opposition to SB 852, 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.

I am not here fighting for my job—I am fighting for my **students** and a **program that changes lives**.

While **Superintendents focus on the dollars and cents**, we focus on **students and the partnerships that make this program successful**.

We don't just talk about **career readiness**, we **ignite passion**. We **plant seeds** and bring energy that excites students about **internships, apprenticeships**, and **careers** they never knew existed.

Even the **quietest students** start **discussing their futures** when career coaches enter the room. Career coaches create a **safe space** for students to learn about **self-advocacy, teamwork, grit, and soft and hard skills**, showing them how they translate to the real world.

As a career coach I empower students to **dream big** through **vision boards**—because a budget sheet shouldn't limit their future.

Our **community partners believe in this initiative**—just like we do. I advocated bringing **back middle school campus tours at Salisbury University (SU)**, even after they were discontinued post-pandemic. Our initiative chartered a bus and 55 students, staff and parents of 8<sup>th</sup> grade students traveled to SU, had a SU student led tour and lunch in their dining hall with the college students and then shopped for memorabilia in the bookstore before returning to Central Middle. . Our partners, **Anne Arundel Community College, The Board of Health, and CAT South showed up for the entire day for a Mini Science Fair that a teacher requested me to plan and host within a two week period** for 400 7th-grade students who just finished studying anatomy. Our partners shared their career pathways and journeys into the medical field.

Our students explored sensory neurons in the body and learned about various medical careers such as **Cognitive Neuroscientist, Orthopedic Surgeon, Physiatrist, Nurse Practitioner, Occupational Therapist, Lab Technician, and Pathologist Assistant.**

The students learned about the effects of smoking, the dangers of vaping and smoking marijuana at a young age, and the importance of proper nutrition and sports drinks. They also had the chance to practice CPR on adult and child dummies with guidance from both the Department of Health and AACC and learned how to treat open wounds with AACC. Students also explored the programs offered by Anne Arundel Community College that provide pathways into the medical field without requiring a four-year degree.

At the career coach, **Anne Arundel Student Career Excellence table**, students disassembled and reassembled four skeletons and three torso models, examined a life-size spine model, discussed spine disorders with their teacher, and assembled a life-size brain and heart models. Additionally, the students enjoyed playing the game Operation, though many found it challenging to keep a steady hand, resulting in frequent buzzing from the patient!

In addition, Central Middle School (CMS) **6th graders** took ownership of their futures by creating their own **Career Club (CCATS - Career Club and Teaching Students)** and **illustrating the connection between academics and careers**. In our program, students **earn more than incentives**—they **earn confidence through edutainment activities such as career trivia**, exploring their strengths through **personality and interest surveys**, and **discovering the vast world of careers beyond the obvious**.

Prior to my role, CMS never had a career fair. As a career coach I brought in **35 professionals** to meet **8th-grade students** in my first year. This year, that number greatly increased to **over 90 professionals from the community**, engaging, informing and educating the **entire school community**. These numbers communicate an impactful **story**—our **students are being seen, heard, and prepared for success**. I **appointed over 20 student ambassadors** each career day who would not typically be recognized and gave them a **leadership role**. And they excelled; this year, they encouraged each other to wear black and white to be uniform. **My students proactively created a dress code to present a unified appearance during their career day fair, it demonstrated a significant success in my career coaching efforts, showing their school community how they are actively engaged in their career exploration, taking ownership of their professional image, and showing a mature understanding of the importance of first impressions in a professional setting.**

Career coaching helps **level the playing field** by ensuring that **ALL students** have access to career information, guidance, and support. A strong **career coaching pipeline from middle to high school** fosters **Early career awareness, Informed decision-making, and Preparation for life after graduation**.

**Career coaching should not be a privilege but a right for every student, regardless of background.** Cutting this program means **closing doors for students** who rely on career coaching to shape their futures. 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.

This program is **not just a line item in a budget**, it is a **lifeline for students** who need **guidance, inspiration, and opportunity**. While **Superintendents debate dollars**, we are out here **changing lives**. **Investing in our students is not an expense—it is our best investment.**

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 SB 852 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,

Sharita Ali  
Career Coach  
Anne Arundel County Workforce Development

# **Somaya Windley Student Letters Opposing SB-852 (7**

Uploaded by: Somaya Windley

Position: UNF



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

Dear Senator Feldman,

When I first entered high school, I wasn't sure what career path I wanted to take. Thanks to our career coach, I attended a career expo that introduced me to various industries. I also visited Maryland Public Television and different universities to explore my options. These experiences have been life-changing for me, and I believe every student should have the same opportunities. Please vote against SB 852 to protect career programs for students.

Sincerely,  
Somaya Windley  
Grade: 11  
Old Mill High School

# **Spencer Evans - Testimony - Senate Bill 852.pdf**

Uploaded by: Spencer Evans

Position: UNF

My name is Spencer Evans. I currently serve as an In-School Youth Career Coach for the Anne Arundel Workforce Development Corporation, working with students in 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> grades. I believe that every student should have access to the tools that allow them to become successful as they become adults and make their mark in the world. As we are currently dealing with an everchanging job market and a skillset mismatch that adversely affects our economy, it is important for our students to receive the necessary career coaching services to equip them with the tools they need to thrive.

For some students, career coaching is confirmation of their plans and goals. For others, career coaching is a way to gain information that they may not otherwise have access to. For all students, however, it helps them explore their passions, understand their strengths, navigate pathways that are accessible to them, and set themselves up for life as they know it. This support is crucial for fostering self-awareness and empowering students to make informed decisions about their educational and professional paths.

Now, let's consider the negative impacts of not having access to career coaching services:

- **Lack of Direction:** Without career coaching, students may feel lost and uncertain about their future. This can lead to indecision and anxiety, making it difficult for them to select appropriate courses or extracurricular activities that align with their interests and goals.
- **Missed Opportunities:** Many students may not be aware of the various career pathways available to them, particularly those in high-demand fields. The absence of career coaching can mean missing out on scholarships, internships, and vocational programs that could set them on a successful trajectory.
- **Increased Dropout Rates:** A lack of guidance can result in disengagement from school. When students don't see a clear connection between their education and future careers, they may lose motivation and ultimately drop out, closing the door on countless opportunities.
- **Inequity and Disadvantage:** Students from underserved backgrounds are especially affected. Without access to career coaching, they may not have the same exposure to resources and networks that could help them succeed. This perpetuates cycles of inequality, limiting their potential and contributing to broader societal disparities.
- **Workforce Preparedness:** Finally, a workforce that lacks coaching can lead to a skills gap in our economy. Employers often struggle to find candidates with the right qualifications and soft skills, further hindering economic growth.

To conclude, career coaching in middle and high schools is not merely a luxury; it is essential for preparing our students for the real world in a way that addresses some fears and issues they may encounter on their journey while allowing them to explore opportunities that are within their reach. By investing in comprehensive career coaching programs, we can empower every student to explore their potential, find their passion, and build the skills necessary for a fulfilling career.

I ask that you oppose Senate Bill 852 and ensure that no student is left without the guidance they need to succeed. ALL students deserve every opportunity to thrive.

Respectfully,

Spencer Evans

# **Student Letters Opposing SB-852.pdf**

Uploaded by: Tamika Patterson

Position: UNF

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

Dear Senator Feldman,

My name is Tamika Patterson, and I am a student at Old Mill High School. I am writing to express my opposition to SB 852 because it could negatively impact the career opportunities available to students like me. Thanks to our career coach, I have been exposed to different industries through career expos, guest speakers, and field trips to universities, businesses, and trade schools. These experiences have helped me make informed decisions about my future. Passing SB 852 could limit access to these opportunities, and I strongly urge you to reconsider/oppose this bill.

Sincerely,

Tamika Patterson

Grade: 12

Old Mill High School

## **Xxavien Mackell Student Letters Opposing SB-852 (6**

Uploaded by: Xxavien Mackell

Position: UNF

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

Dear Senator Feldman,

As a student who has benefited from career education initiatives, I strongly oppose SB 852. I have personally attended field trips to trade schools and colleges, heard from guest speakers in different industries, and participated in a career expo that introduced me to new career paths. These experiences have guided me in my decision-making for the future. SB 852 could restrict these opportunities for students. I urge you to vote no on this bill.

Sincerely,  
Xxavien Mackell  
Grade: 12  
Old Mill High School

# **Zack Bennett Student Letters Opposing SB-852 (5).p**

Uploaded by: Zack Bennett

Position: UNF



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

Dear Senator Feldman,

I am currently a student at Old Mill High School, and the career programs available to me have made a significant impact on my life. I have attended multiple field trips, including visits to Maryland Public Television and universities, that have expanded my understanding of potential careers. I have also met professionals from different industries through school-hosted career expos. If it wasn't for my career coach I never would have got to meet an internationally known sports broadcaster, which has shifted my mindset to look more into the journalism field. If SB 852 passes, students like me may no longer have access to these opportunities. Please vote against this bill.

Sincerely,

Zack Bennett

Grade: 12

Old Mill High School

# **SB 852 - Joint AIB\_SBE - LOI.pdf**

Uploaded by: Joy Schaefer

Position: INFO

BILL: Senate Bill 852

TITLE: Blueprint for Maryland's Future – Alterations

SPONSOR: Senator Lewis Young

HEARING DATE: March 5, 2025

COMMITTEE: Education, Energy, and the Environment (Budget and Taxation)

POSITION: Information

---

The Accountability and Implementation Board (AIB), the Maryland State Board of Education (State Board), and the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) are providing information regarding **Senate Bill 852 - Blueprint for Maryland's Future - Alterations**. This legislation proposes substantial changes to multiple components of the Blueprint law, including the distribution and reporting of minimum school funding, the definition of Tier I students, the Career Counseling Program for Middle and High School Students, access to post-college & career readiness pathways, and the career ladder.

The AIB, the State Board, and MSDE have jointly discussed these issues in our collaborative efforts to implement the Blueprint and would like to offer our perspectives.

### **Distribution of Program Funds and Minimum School Funding**

SB 852 **changes the minimum school funding reporting requirements**, as set out in the Blueprint law (Education Article, Section 5-234), **allowing reporting in the aggregate for each school, rather than by category**. The Blueprint law defines “minimum school funding” as 75% of the per pupil amount applicable to the foundation program, the weighted amounts in Compensatory Education Aid, Prekindergarten Aid (for public providers), Multilingual Learner Aid, Special Education Aid, Transitional Supplemental Instruction Aid, College and Career Readiness. For Prek private providers and Concentration of Poverty grants, the requirement is 100% of the per pupil amount.

Providing flexibility within the statute, the AIB and State Board issued a joint policy in May 2024, giving LEAs up to three years to meet the minimum school funding requirement. If modifications to the policy are warranted, both boards will consider making adjustments to the extent they have the authority to do so. We believe the transparency and accountability of the minimum school funding requirement is a critical component of the Blueprint to provide equitable funding at the school level. We do not believe legislative alterations to the structure are necessary at this time as the inaugural data becomes available later this year and LEAs continue work to meet the three-year timeline outlined by both boards in the joint policy.

The bill also **adds a waiver provision for the minimum school funding distribution requirement for schools with enrollments of 350 or less students.** The Blueprint legislation requires AIB to adopt a waiver process for county boards, including specifically for significant shifts in total school-level enrollment, in school-level enrollment of at-promise students, and a significant difference in the amount of funding provided through the formula and the amount of expenditures necessary for a category or at-promise students. The AIB released a draft waiver policy at its February 20, 2025 Board meeting and shared recommendations received from the LEA CFOs, which included a waiver for small schools. An AIB workgroup will review these recommendations and others that are received and develop a revised draft policy to be discussed at the AIB's March 20 Board meeting, with an intent to finalize the policy in Spring 2025. The State Board and MSDE have committed to embedding potential regulatory processes based on the waiver developed by the AIB.

### **Early Childhood Education/Prekindergarten**

**SB 852 proposes to alter the definition of a “Tier I child” to include students who have a disability or from a home in which English is not the primary spoken language.**

The AIB and State Board support this policy provision in principle, and agree that clarity is needed around which groups of students are considered Tier I for funding purposes. Both boards also understand the fiscal implications of expanding Tier I eligibility and that they must be considered by the General Assembly. We encourage the General Assembly to explore the impacts of this alteration in the definition of Tier I child.

### **Career Counseling Program for Middle and High School Students**

**SB 852 eliminates the Career Counseling Program for Middle and High School Students,** the purpose of which is to provide each middle and high school student with individualized career counseling services to support the selection of a post-College & Career Readiness (CCR) Pathway. Further, it would eliminate the funding mechanism for the program in FY 25, one year earlier than established in the Blueprint law (Education Article, Section 5-213).

The AIB, the State Board, and MSDE believe that implementing an effective career counseling program for students beginning in middle school is critical to motivating and supporting students to achieve the College and Career Readiness (CCR) standard by the end of 10th grade and no later than high school graduation. As we approach the 2nd year of implementation of the career counseling program, there has been progress but it has not been consistent across the 24 jurisdictions. The AIB and the State Board are working with the CTE Committee and our local partners to discuss and investigate the challenges to implementing this program, as well as consider the benefits of adopting a joint policy to support best practices in career counseling programs. The CTE Committee is also scheduled to provide a report by December 1, 2025, on best practices that are being implemented by the programs. These developments should assist the General Assembly in developing policy in the 2026 session and going forward.

### **Post-College & Career Readiness (Dual Enrollment, Advanced Placement, IB, CTE)**

The bill **authorizes county boards to develop and establish income eligibility guidelines for post-CCR Pathways while requiring access at no cost to students with family incomes that meet eligibility requirements for Federal free and reduced price meals.**

Both boards are committed to working with the Dual Enrollment Workgroup that the AIB is convening in collaboration with MSDE to explore this issue with LEAs and institutions of higher education. At this time, while we recognize the fiscal constraints that LEAs are facing, neither board supports efforts to constrain access to post-CCR pathways for students who have met the CCR standard. Joint policy adopted by the State Board and AIB in Spring 2024 specified that every student who has met the CCR standard should have the opportunity to take at least four dual enrollment courses in high school, which maintains equitable access for all students across the State while at the same time addresses the fiscal constraints that LEAs are facing by allowing them to set a maximum at or above 4 courses.

### **Career Ladder**

**SB 852 removes Assistant Principals and Principals from career ladder provisions, eliminates the Administrator Track of the career ladder, and reduces the State's contribution to teacher salary increases related to the maintenance of National Board Certification.**

Both boards have been clear on the need to develop and execute a clear vision with regard to administrators on the career ladder. Generally, there is agreement that current administrators should be grandfathered into the National Board Certification (NBC) requirements (i.e., only new principals on or after July 1, 2029, would be required to hold NBC), and both the AIB and State Board are considering the issue of the principal pipeline, particularly as it impacts high-poverty schools. The boards plan to further discuss the issue at a future joint meeting.

The AIB and State Board affirm that the maximum State and local contribution amount is subject to collective bargaining between LEAs and local teachers' associations.

### **Required Studies**

#### **Effect of National Board Certification on Instruction**

**SB 852 requires the AIB to study and analyze the effect of teachers with National Board Certification on student achievement** and the feasibility of using additional, comparable teacher credentials associated with student outcomes. The study also requires the collection of demographic data of NBC teachers and how the data compares to the total population of teachers. The bill sets the completion date for the study as January 1, 2026.

Both boards note that, while this report is feasible in the future, data collection to support this analysis only began in October 2024. It will take several years of data before a meaningful analysis can be conducted. Therefore, the current six-month timeline in the bill is not feasible. The earliest that such an analysis may be possible is January 1, 2028. Additionally, there is an estimated fiscal impact to the AIB of between \$150,000 - \$200,000 to engage researchers to complete the study.

#### Special Education Adequacy Study

Both boards are supportive of reviewing facets of the outlined adequacy study in the bill. The existing Special Education Workgroup is considering recommendations on legislative language that would outline potential approaches for incorporating what may need further study in its final report to the AIB.

Respectfully, the AIB, State Board, and MSDE request the Committee consider this information as you deliberate **SB 852**. Please contact Joy Schaefer, Government Relations Director, AIB, at [joy.schaefer@maryland.gov](mailto:joy.schaefer@maryland.gov) or 410-991-7326; or Dr. Akilah Alleyne, Executive Director of Government Affairs, MSDE, at [akilah.alleyne@maryland.gov](mailto:akilah.alleyne@maryland.gov) or 410-767-0504, if you would like more information.