

House of Delegates Ways & Means Committee
SB8 Education – Maryland Civic Excellence Program – Established
Bill Hearing Date: March 19, 2025
Position: Support



Dear Honorable Committee Members,

My name is JaMarcus Roy, and I am a resident of Baltimore County. I am writing to express my strong support for SB8/HB72, which seeks to establish the Maryland Seal of Civic Excellence program.

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

The Maryland Seal of Civic Excellence has widespread support from diverse stakeholders, including students, educators, civic organizations, and state education leaders. It is also part of a growing national movement—many states have already adopted similar cost-effective initiatives to strengthen civic education and encourage youth engagement.

The Seal of Civic Excellence will:

- ★ Encourage students to engage more deeply in civic education, leadership, and service.
- ★ Highlight the importance of staying informed on local, state, and national issues.
- ★ Inspire schools to integrate more civics into their curricula and recognize student achievement.

On March 14, 2025 during the last day of the Maryland Civics Week I sponsored the Youth Civics Workshop conducted at Coppin State University. During this workshop I saw first-hand the personal intrigue of many high school and college students as they learned more about the process of civics at the local, state and federal levels. As the workshop progressed throughout the day so did the engagement from the students as they learned how their voice and their vote can create change within their local and national communities. I believe that teaching civics in every grade (K-12, college) is a necessary aspect of our democratic society if we are to ensure that our citizens have the opportunity to become equally well informed on the structure of the democracies that impact their lives daily. Increasing the investment in civic engagement by passing the Maryland Seal of Civic Excellence Program is a direct enabler to ensuring that Maryland's students receive the benefits of civic education as they are further introduced into the society they will continue to adopt as growing citizens.

In conclusion, SB8/HB72 is a smart, cost-effective investment in the future of Maryland's democracy. It has bipartisan support, adds no additional cost to the state, and a proven track record of success in other states. By supporting this bill, the committee will help ensure that Maryland students are recognized for their civic leadership and prepared to actively contribute to their communities.

Thank you for your consideration.

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