

**TO:** House Committee on Ways and Means

**BILL:** House Bill (HB) 993 - Education – Public Middle Schools – Course on Consequences of a Felony Murder Conviction

**DATE:** February 24, 2025

**POSITION:** Oppose

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**Chair Atterbeary, Chair Clippinger, and Members of the Ways and Means and Judiciary Committees:**

The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) respectfully opposes **HB 993**, which would require MSDE to develop content standards for a course on the consequences of a criminal conviction for felony murder for students in grades 6 through 8 to be implemented by public schools by the 2026-2027 school year, requiring revision to the approved [Maryland Social Studies Standards](#).

The State Board and MSDE established a process for reviewing, revising, and adopting standards, frameworks, and curricular resources on January 23, 2024. Both entities are strident in ensuring that the development of standards, frameworks, and curricular resources is conducted through this process, which includes collaboration between the State Board, MSDE, LEAs, and community members through the convening of a Standards and Frameworks Validation Committee (SFVC).

Guided by this process, the Social Studies SFVC was initially convened on June 28, 2024, to review and propose revisions to the current Maryland Social Studies Frameworks. Changes to these established processes would be duplicative and alter the timeline in which the standards will be updated, thus impacting the associated alignment of curricular resources implemented in LEAs and requiring substantial efforts to realign them.

Beyond this, the changes required by this bill to the Maryland Social Studies Standards would alter the national best practices aligned inquiry statement structure by shifting to a content-specific structure. This change would require substantial revision beyond the inclusion of the content required by **HB 993** to ensure that the standards reflect an accurate representation of content and topics.

We respectfully request that you consider this information as you deliberate **HB 993**. Please contact Akilah Alleyne, Ph.D. (Executive Director of Government Affairs) [akilah.alleyne@maryland.gov](mailto:akilah.alleyne@maryland.gov) for any additional information.