

## HB324: County Boards of Education – Antibias Training - Requirement

### Favorable

Testimony as submitted by:

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The Hon. Chair, Delegate Atterbeary

The Hon. Vice-Chair, Delegate Wilkins

Members of the Committee

My name is Josh Bokee, and I am a parent with a student in Frederick County Public Schools (FCPS). I respectfully recommend to the committee a **Favorable** vote on HB 324 – County Boards of Education – Antibias Training – Requirement as introduced by the honorable delegates, Marc Korman and Vanessa Atterbeary.

Extending the same antibias training requirements that are already in place for public school employees to members of the Board of the Education is a logical next step to help ensure that our public schools are welcoming and inclusive learning institutions for all students and staff. Antibias training, when it is evidence based and professionally applied, becomes an effective tool that ultimately strengthens school systems.

Boards of education members are stewards of large, sophisticated organizations, serving multiple thousands of students and employees. In many Maryland jurisdictions, public school systems are the largest local employer, whose reach extends into almost every neighborhood of the community. As such, it is important that leaders of these organizations set a high professional standard as they conduct their business. HB324 helps to support that by ensuring that board members, like school employees, are aware of the need to be inclusive, what implicit bias is and how to address prejudices that are faced by historically marginalized peoples.

I thank the sponsors for the bill's introduction and respectfully recommend a **favorable** vote by the committee. Thank you.