

Unfavorable Testimony for Maryland HB1512/SB0887

County Boards of Education - Reappointment of Incumbent County Superintendent - Authorization

I am writing as a representative of the Baltimore County Parent and Student Coalition, Inc (BCPASC) to submit opposition to HB1512/SB0887.

BCPASC is a nonpartisan volunteer grassroots organization of 5,000 members that seeks to ensure students are the first priority in Baltimore County Public Schools. We seek to ensure the school board is governed in accordance with the law, specifically that the roles are non-partisan.

Reasons for an Unfavorable Report

1. Reduced Transparency and Accountability

The removal of the February 1 notification requirement diminishes transparency in the reappointment process. This provision currently ensures that stakeholders, including parents, educators, and community members, are informed about potential leadership changes in advance. Without this requirement, decisions regarding superintendent reappointments could be made without adequate public input or scrutiny.

2. Potential for Premature or Hasty Reappointments

Allowing reappointments at any point during a superintendent's term risks premature decision-making before a comprehensive evaluation of their performance can be conducted. Structured timelines under current law ensure that boards have sufficient time to assess leadership effectiveness and make informed decisions based on long-term district goals.

3. Disruption to Stability and Long-Term Planning

Frequent or unpredictable reappointment decisions could disrupt continuity in leadership and long-term planning within school districts. Superintendents play a critical role in implementing multi-year strategies related to curriculum, budgeting, and staffing. Altering the timeline for reappointment may undermine these efforts.

4. Focus on Administrative Changes Over Pressing Educational Needs

Maryland schools face significant challenges, including teacher shortages, funding

disparities, and achievement gaps among students. Legislative priorities should focus on addressing these critical issues rather than modifying administrative processes that are functioning adequately under existing laws.

5. Risk of Political Influence

By allowing boards to reappoint superintendents at any point during their term, HB1512 opens the door to potential political influence or favoritism in leadership decisions. Current structured timelines help mitigate this risk by ensuring decisions are made at predictable intervals.

Conclusion

HB1512/SB0887 introduces unnecessary changes to an established process that ensures transparency, accountability, and stability in school district leadership. The current law provides a balanced framework for evaluating superintendent performance and making informed decisions about reappointments.

For these reasons, we recommend an UNFAVORABLE REPORT for HB1512/SB0887.
Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Amy Adams, President BCPASC

Mary A. Taylor, Vice President BCPASC

