

UNFAVORABLE
House Bill 1185
Homeschool Students in Maryland—Right to Play

House Ways and Means Committee
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The Maryland State Education Association opposes House Bill 1185, which would allow home-schooled students who do not attend public schools to participate in school athletics at a public school.

MSEA represents 75,000 educators and school employees who work in Maryland's public schools, teaching and preparing our almost 900,000 students so they can pursue their dreams. MSEA also represents 39 local affiliates in every county across the state of Maryland, and our parent affiliate is the 3-million-member National Education Association (NEA).

MSEA opposes public money going to private schools or homeschooling, whatever the vehicle—state-funded vouchers, textbooks, programs or tax credits. School athletics are not standalone, independent activities, but rather an outgrowth of the school's educational program for the students. They are activities that further advance the mission of the school in a cross-curricular way, as well as the education of the total child. They often require a certain grade point average for participation or another qualifier like good behavior or a certain attendance record.

We believe allowing home-schooled students and their parents the option to pick and choose the programs in which they would like to participate, even based on space availability, would be an additional burden on already overburdened school systems. Marylanders pay taxes for the common good, covering many services we do not all personally use, whether they are public schools, senior citizen centers, or libraries.

We urge the committee to issue an unfavorable report on HB 1185.