



March 11, 2025

Ways and Means Committee  
The Honorable Vanessa Atterbeary, Chair  
The Honorable Jheanelle Wilkins, Vice Chair

HB 1447 – Education – Maryland STEM Program

Position: Support

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony today.

Teach MD is the Maryland division of Teach Coalition (a project of the Orthodox Union), advocating on behalf of over 30 Jewish schools enrolling nearly 9,000 students within the state.

Teachers are the foundation for a classroom and student success. Engaging teachers introduce children to the possibilities of learning. Learning how to learn – especially in the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math fields - is more important now than ever. New frontiers are being explored every day in artificial intelligence, biology and gene editing, medical care, and consumer technology. It behooves us to ensure that Maryland is the place where these cutting edge advancements are made.

However, public and nonpublic schools across Maryland struggle to hire and retain highly qualified teachers, particularly in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) subjects<sup>1</sup>. Many of these teachers leave the world of education for more lucrative careers. Each year, about 2,000 public school teaching jobs are unfilled on the first day of school and over a tenth of Maryland public school teachers quit teaching<sup>2</sup>. Nonpublic schools face the same staffing challenges, often scrambling to find experienced teachers to teach STEM courses.

The proposed Maryland STEM Teacher Program in HB1447 addresses this problem by encouraging current and retired public school teachers to teach STEM subjects in nonpublic schools with no interference with their responsibilities as public school teachers. Current teachers will be able to teach in the afternoons, increasing their earning potential as teachers. Retired teachers will be encouraged to rejoin the workforce at times that fit their schedule.

The program mirrors an existing one in New Jersey, wherein over 115 public school teachers participated in the most recent cycle. With buy-in from dozens of school districts, nonpublic schools, and public school teachers themselves, this program is a model for effective public-private partnerships.

We respectfully request the legislature strengthen STEM education and educators in Maryland by supporting HB1447. The Maryland STEM Teacher Program is a crucial step towards enhancing STEM education and better learning experiences while addressing teacher shortages.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

<sup>1</sup> Maryland State Department of Education. (2022). *Maryland Teacher Workforce: Supply, Demand, and Diversity*. Retrieved from <https://www.marylandpublicschools.org/stateboard/Documents/2022/0726/TabGBlueprintAndDataDeepDiveTeacherPipelineAndDiversity.pdf> on February 27, 2025.

<sup>2</sup> Maryland State Department of Education. (2024). *Maryland Teacher Workforce: Supply, Demand, and Diversity*. Retrieved from <https://marylandpublicschools.org/stateboard/Documents/2024/0521/Maryland-Teacher-Workforce-Supply-Demand-and-Diversity-A.pdf> on February 27, 2025.