

HB0583_RichardKaplowitz_UNF
02/12/2025

Richard Keith Kaplowitz
Frederick, MD 21703

TESTIMONY ON HB#/0583- POSITION: UNFAVORABLE
Primary and Secondary Education - Virtual Schools - Alterations

TO: Chair Atterbeary, Vice Chair Wilkins, and members of the Ways and Means Committee
FROM: Richard Keith Kaplowitz

My name is Richard Keith Kaplowitz. I am a resident of District 3, Frederick County. I am submitting this testimony opposing HB#/0583, **Primary and Secondary Education - Virtual Schools – Alterations**

While I agree that Remote Virtual Learning is a highly desirable offering for many of the students throughout the state placing this mandate on our counties and Baltimore City is wrong. The financial stress in Maryland, much of it caused by actions in Washington, is causing gaps between what school systems need and the financial resources available to meet all of these needs.

A mandate at this time from the potential law this bill would create is unwise and undesirable. This bill would require each county board of education to establish a virtual school. While the bill encourages a county board that is unable to offer a virtual school on its own to collaborate with one or more other county boards to jointly establish a school it again doesn't identify how those boards acquire the monies needed to do that. When and if it becomes possible to offer virtual learning I agree that requiring that the criteria for enrollment in a virtual school established by the State Department of Education or a county board be reasonable and not unduly interfere with an applicant's ability to enroll in the virtual school. Once we get past this financial crisis we can consider the goal of this bill for providing that a certain outreach campaign be conducted equitably so all students and caregivers know of and can determine if an RVP solution is best for meeting their educational needs.

I respectfully urge this committee to return an unfavorable report on HB#/0583.