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MAYOR

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HB772

February 25, 2025

TO: Members of the House Ways and Means Committee

FROM: Nina Themelis, Director of Mayor's Office of Government Relations

RE: House Bill 772 - Education - Career Counseling Program for Middle and High School Students - Alterations

POSITION: SUPPORT

Chair Atterbeary, Vice Chair Wilkins, and Members of the Committee, please be advised that the Baltimore City Administration (BCA) **supports** House Bill (HB) 772.

HB 722 continues the career counseling services for middle and high school students provided by Maryland's local workforce development boards, community colleges and local education agencies started under the Blueprint for Maryland's Future. These services ensure that students receive real-time, industry-aligned career counseling, helping to build a skilled workforce and address skill gaps in Maryland's economy.

Maryland's local workforce development boards, including the Baltimore Workforce Development Board and the Mayor's Office of Employment Development, play a critical role in bridging the gap between education and employment, offering direct connections to employers, labor market insights, and career pathway resources. Already, in Baltimore City, this model has major accomplishments, with:

- 46 workforce professionals deployed to middle and high schools for one to four days a week.
- Holding more 1,000 events, including workshops, company tours/job shadows, career fair support, and guest speaker engagements.
- More than 17,000 students reached as of February 2025, in less than one year, ensuring they have the tools to make informed career decisions.

HB 722 reinforces the partnerships between our workforce boards, educators, and businesses, ensuring that they continue and grow into the future. By aligning career counseling with labor market needs, this legislation continues to work toward preparing Maryland's future workforce for high-demand careers in growing industries.

For the above stated reasons, the BCA respectfully requests a **favorable** report on HB 772.