

TO: House Committee on Ways and Means

BILL: House Bill (HB) 875 – Commission on History, Culture, and Civics in Education

DATE: February 24, 2025

POSITION: Information

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The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) is providing information for consideration regarding House Bill (HB) 875 – Commission on History, Culture, and Civics in Education, which will create a Commission to make recommendations to MSDE and the Maryland State Board of Education (State Board) to further the discovery, interpretation, and learning of the history, culture, and civics of the United States and Maryland. MSDE will be responsible for staffing the commission, making all activities and materials available on its website, reimbursing members for travel expenses, and submitting an annual report on the commission's findings and recommendations to MSDE, the Governor, and the General Assembly. Additionally, the State Board must review the Commission's findings and can make any appropriate changes to the pre-kindergarten through 12th-grade standards annually.

While the State Board and MSDE are supportive of the fundamental principles outlined in the requirements of the bill, the State Board and MSDE established a process for reviewing, revising, and adopting standards, frameworks, and curricular resources on January 23, 2024. Both entities are strident in ensuring that the development of standards, frameworks, and curricular resources is conducted through this process, which includes collaboration between the State Board, MSDE, LEAs, and community members through the convening of a Standards and Frameworks Validation Committee (SFVC).

Guided by this process, the Social Studies SFVC was initially convened on June 28, 2024, to review and propose revisions to the current Maryland Social Studies Frameworks. The mission of the SFVC aligns with the actions and principles outlined in this legislation. Changes to these established processes would be duplicative and alter the timeline in which the standards will be updated, thus impacting the associated alignment of curricular resources implemented in LEAs and requiring substantial efforts to realign them. The Social Studies Frameworks are currently out for [public comment](#), and comment closes on March 04, 2025 at 5pm.

Further, the existing Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR) 13A.04.08.01 and 13A.01.06.04 have established regulations that address aspects of the legislation. COMAR 13A.04.08.01 provides requirements for social studies instructional programs from prekindergarten through grade 12, including those in alignment with the principles of this legislation related to meeting the instructional needs of students. While COMAR 13A.01.06.04 provides additional requirements for LEAs related to curriculum development and implementation in all contents that are in alignment with the principles of this legislation related to the lens through which curriculum, pedagogy, professional learning, instructional materials, and assessment design are developed.

The Commission's role may be additionally duplicative and in conflict with the work of identifying High-Quality Instructional Materials (HQIM) as required by 3.1.3 of the Blueprint for Maryland's Future.

We respectfully request that you consider this information as you deliberate **HB 875**. For further information, please contact Dr. Akilah Alleyne (Executive Director of Government Affairs) at 410-767-0504 or [Akilah.alleyne@maryland.gov](mailto:Akilah.alleyne@maryland.gov).