

Chair Atterbeary, Vice Chair Wilkins, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Brenton Meade, I am a first-year Jefferson Scholar at the University of Virginia, a proud Anne Arundel County Public Schools graduate, and I served as president of the Chesapeake Regional Association of Student Councils (CRASC), the body that elects the Anne Arundel County Student Member of the Board of Education (SMOB), from 2022 to 2024. I write to express my strong **support** for HB402/SB307, a bill that would increase the compensation, in the form of a scholarship, provided to the student member of the Anne Arundel County Board of Education. The county board unanimously voted to support this bill, and this committee should do the same. The student member performs the same responsibilities as the adult members in addition to their obligations as a student, and should therefore be entitled to the same amount of compensation.

During the 2022 legislative session, a bill was introduced to increase compensation for the adult members of the Anne Arundel County Board of Education ([SB510](#)) but omitted the student member from said increase. As a member of the CRASC Executive Board at the time, I recall CRASC taking a “support with amendments” stance on the bill with the argument that the student member also deserved an increase in compensation. In mid-March, the bill appeared to stall in the General Assembly, so we opted to not advocate as vigorously as we originally planned. The bill drifted from our memory, and I found out late last year that the bill had passed after previously convincing myself that it had died. It is shameful that over the span of three years, 2 student members who served with their adult colleagues, attending the same conferences and closed sessions, continued to do their jobs while receiving lesser payment. But this committee has an opportunity to correct this injustice before the next student member leaves office.

I urge the committee to **favorably report** HB402.

Sincerely,

Brenton A. Meade