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Senator Brian J. Feldman, Chair  
Senator Cheryl C. Kagan, Vice Chair  
Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee  
2 West Miller Senate Office Building  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Re: Opposition to SB 554 – Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners Appointment Process

Dear Senator Hayes:

I write in strong opposition to Senate Bill 554. Although I am employed by the State of Maryland, I submit this correspondence solely in my personal capacity—as a private citizen, a proud parent of two graduates of Baltimore City Public Schools, and as a current Executive Member (Treasurer) of the Parent and Community Advisory Board (PCAB) and Chair of its Policy Committee.

SB 554 proposes eliminating the Baltimore City Public School Board Community Panel and removing the role of PCAB, which was created by Maryland law in 1997 to ensure that parents have a say in the Baltimore City Schools. It will also eliminate the voices of other long-standing community stakeholders from the nomination process for the Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners. In doing so, the bill would grant the mayor sole authority to appoint members to the Board, subject only to Senate confirmation.

The current structure was established by law to ensure transparency, shared governance, and meaningful community engagement in selecting individuals who shape the direction of our school system. The Community Panel was designed to provide balanced representation from educators, parents, students, labor, civil rights advocates, and community organizations, again, like PCAB. This inclusive framework reflects the understanding that public education is a public trust.

Eliminating the Panel—and specifically removing PCAB and other community voices—undermines the very purpose for which it was created. The legislation appears to shift the process from one grounded in collaborative input to one centered in a single appointing authority. While Senate confirmation provides oversight, it does not replace the deliberate, community-based vetting process that currently exists.

As a parent and long-time community advocate, I believe that maintaining structured, meaningful public participation strengthens public confidence in school governance. Concentrating appointment power risks diminishing transparency and weakening accountability to families and stakeholders who are directly impacted by Board decisions.

PCAB ensures that families have a direct voice to the CEO of City Schools, her team and in the choices Baltimore City Public Schools Commissioners makes for the students of this city. We provide resources and pertinent updates to families that may otherwise not have access to the information they need or want about the issues that affect their community schools.

The mayor's office and his team are already clouded with negativity. Removing the community panel and giving him more power will create even more distrust in his office.

I respectfully urge members of the to committee to reconsider the provisions of SB 554 as it removes equity, transparency, and public trust. I request the Committee to return an unfavorable report.

Thank you for your consideration of my views.

Respectfully submitted,



Charlene Faison  
Private Citizen  
Parent of Two Baltimore City Public Schools Graduates  
Executive Member (Treasurer), Parent and Community Advisory Board (PCAB)  
Chair and PCAB Policy Committee