



Dear Members of the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee:

I am writing this testimony in support of House Bill 0026 (HB0026). I don't take this opportunity lightly to advocate on behalf of modern American families in Maryland as a long time educator.

So may ask, why is this bill important to families and public education? I can assure you that this bill is one of the most urgent and needed pieces of legislation to ensure we meet the needs of all children effectively.

This policy will allow us to truly bring innovation in educational practices to all children across the state as we all learn differently.

Our learning differences require different programming, specialists, teachers and curriculum that the school behind your house may not have but the school in a neighboring community might. This is one example of how parents and families having the ability to choose the best educational setting for their child(ren) can help increase positive outcomes.

As you know, supporting **Senate Bill 350**, would authorize county boards of education to adopt open enrollment policies allowing students to attend a public school in a county other than the one where they live, free of charge, subject to clear, equitable procedures.

Modern American families thrive when children and youth have stable, efficient and innovative educational options.

Maryland also has a large number of caretakers and grandparents raising school aged children. This helps families that are blended, multicultural, multilingual or multigenerational who have responsibilities across the region prepare, plan and provide the educational care needed for their children.

Expanding access to all families allows students to take advantage of opportunities that can help improve their post secondary outcomes and most importantly positively impact their ability to be successful citizens in our society.

Allowing Maryland families to choose which educational option works best for their child(ren) and this bill gives parents the opportunity to meet their children's specific learning needs in the best educational setting.



Adopting open enrollment policies doesn't create cost, it constructs change for children to grow in educational spaces that may not be available to them.

It makes public access universal, moving choice away from being available only to families with resources like private tuition or transportation.

The National Parents Union's "Closing the Promise Gap" framework highlights a critical contrast in education policy: **public school choice, like open enrollment, can increase equity for all families**, whereas tuition-based vouchers or Education Savings Accounts often create two tiers of access, privileging those who can pay and leaving others behind.

SB350 keeps choice squarely within the public realm — no tuition, no separate system, and no economic gatekeeping — ensuring that all students can benefit.

Transparency and safeguards are key to ensuring that every child and family that goes through the open enrollment process will be supported and that administrative staff won't be overwhelmed due to lack of resources. This bill will improve planning, school selection, design and educational programming.

I believe that Maryland's public education system will only grow stronger through the adoption of SB350. When families can choose the best fit for their children through a commonsense, equity-centered policy that expands access within our public schools, honors local control, and ensures transparency and fairness for families and districts alike, we all win!

I respectfully urge the committee to vote in favor of **Senate Bill 350**.

Thank you.

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