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**BILL:** Senate Bill 263  
**TITLE:** Education - Dependent Children of Active Service Members - Advance Enrollment Procedures  
**HEARING DATE:** February 27, 2026  
**POSITION:** FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS  
**COMMITTEE:** Education, Energy, and the Environment  
**CONTACT:** Jessica Goff, Governmental Affairs Associate (jgoff@mabe.org)

The Maryland Association of Boards of Education (MABE), representing all of the State's local boards of education, **supports with amendments Senate Bill 263 Education - Dependent Children of Active Service Members - Advance Enrollment Procedures**, and appreciates the General Assembly's commitment to promoting educational stability and success for military-connected students. MABE supports policies that promote educational stability, equity, and student success while preserving local governance and operational flexibility. MABE supports military families and military-connected students and recognizes the unique challenges these students face as a result of frequent relocations and transitions between school systems.

Senate Bill 263 intends to reduce educational disruption for military-connected students by requiring local school systems to provide an advance remote enrollment option for the dependents of active service members, prior to their relocation to Maryland. Senate Bill 263 also requires that the advance remote registration process include an opportunity to note whether the student has an individualized education program (IEP) or a 504 plan, and states that the county board must ensure that if the student has an IEP or a 504 plan, the student receives an appropriate education without delay. MABE supports the intent of this legislation and appreciates the sponsor's focus on ensuring that military-connected students experience a smooth transition into Maryland public schools. To ensure clarity and effective implementation at the local level, MABE respectfully requests several amendments.

MABE recommends clarifying the bill text to distinguish that advance enrollment does not include advance services. Local school systems can appropriately process enrollment paperwork in advance of a student's arrival; however, the bill should expressly clarify that advance enrollment does not require the provision of educational services prior to the student's physical presence in the school system and official start of attendance. This distinction is important to ensure consistency with existing funding, staffing, accountability, and service delivery requirements.

Second, MABE recommends clarifying that the bill applies to advance enrollment in a local school system, rather than a specific school assignment. School placement decisions are dependent on finalized residency, attendance boundaries, and school capacity. MABE recommends that the bill specify that advance enrollment does not guarantee placement in a particular school unless the military family has already purchased a home or executed a signed lease within the school system. This clarification preserves local boards' ability to make appropriate and lawful school assignment decisions once residency is confirmed.

Third, MABE supports the provision allowing a military-connected student to remain in the assigned school for the duration of the school year if their family moves again during that year. Educational continuity is critically important, particularly for students experiencing repeated transitions. However, MABE recommends that the bill clarify that transportation is not guaranteed when a student resides outside the school's attendance boundary. This clarification is necessary to avoid unintended operational and fiscal impacts on local school systems.

Local boards of education are best positioned to balance the needs of individual students with systemwide considerations, including capacity, staffing, and transportation logistics. The amendments proposed by MABE are intended to preserve local flexibility while advancing the bill's underlying goal of supporting military-connected students. For these reasons, **MABE supports Senate Bill 263 with amendments** and looks forward to continuing to work with the General Assembly to ensure that Maryland's public schools remain welcoming, responsive, and supportive of military families.