

BILL: Senate Bill 174
TITLE: State Board of Education - Enforcement Procedures - Alteration
HEARING DATE: February 4, 2026
POSITION: SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENT
COMMITTEE: Education, Energy, and the Environment
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The Maryland Association of Boards of Education (MABE), representing all of the State's local boards of education, **supports Senate Bill 174, State Board of Education – Enforcement Procedures – Alteration, with amendment.**

Senate Bill 174 reflects an important and shared goal: reducing prolonged uncertainty in high-stakes proceedings before the Maryland State Board of Education, particularly those involving the removal of local board members and superintendents. Local boards recognize that extended adjudication timelines can impede a school system's ability to function effectively and can create instability for staff, students, and communities. Local boards are particularly concerned about appeals and adjudications with system-wide implications. In these cases, prolonged uncertainty can ripple across an entire school system, diverting attention from the core mission of educating students.

At the same time, adjudications of this nature require a series of procedural steps designed to safeguard due process, including record development, briefing, hearings, and, in some cases, fact-finding. In certain matters, the State Board must refer cases to the Office of Administrative Hearings for an evidentiary hearing and findings of fact to inform the State Board's final decision. Even under aggressive assumptions of efficiency, these requirements make a firm 90-day resolution timeline extraordinarily difficult to achieve in practice. A longer, but still expedited timeline, such as nine months, may be more realistic while still meaningfully advancing the bill's objective of timely resolution. For these high-impact appeals and proceedings, finality matters, and a predictable, expedited process would provide a faster path to stability.

MABE believes there is an opportunity to establish clearer and more workable timelines for resolving high-impact cases in a way that is both achievable and fair, and stands ready to work with the Committee and the State Board of Education to do so.

Therefore, MABE supports Senate Bill 174 with amendment and looks forward to continued collaboration to develop a practical timeline that advances the bill's intent while preserving due process and stability for local school systems.