



BILL: Senate Bill 595
TITLE: County Boards of Education and Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners –
Vacancy Procedures - Alterations
HEARING DATE: March 11, 2026
POSITION: OPPOSE
COMMITTEE: Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
CONTACT: Ms. Jamie Brown, Legislative Representative, 301-766-2946

The Washington County Board of Education opposes Senate Bill 595, which proposes changes to the process for filling vacancies on local boards of education.

Since 2008, vacancies on the Washington County Board of Education have been filled by the Board of County Commissioners through the Washington County School Board Nominating Commission, a system created at Washington County's request. (Education Article, §3-1301) Before that time, the Governor appointed individuals to fill vacancies; however, Washington County sought to shift this authority from the state to the local level. For this reason, the Board opposes Senate Bill 595.

A core value of the Washington County Board of Education is the preservation of governance authority for local boards of education. This principle guides the Board's opposition to any legislation or regulation that would diminish local control or limit budgetary discretion.

Senate Bill 595 would reduce this local authority by dismantling a process requested by Washington County nearly two decades ago—a process that has been successfully utilized twice since its enactment.

While the Washington County Board of Education strongly supports community involvement in elections and decision-making across the state, we believe that each county—and the City of Baltimore—should determine its own method for filling board vacancies. A uniform statewide system is neither necessary nor appropriate.

The Washington County Board of Education opposes Senate Bill 595 and requests the Ways and Means Committee issue an unfavorable report.

Thank you.

cc: Washington County Board of Education Members
Washington County Delegation to the Maryland General Assembly
Dr. David T. Sovine, Superintendent
Dr. Gary Willow, Deputy Superintendent
Mr. Jeffrey Proulx, Chief Operating Officer