

Good afternoon Chairman Feldman and members of the Senate Education, Energy and Environment Committee. My name is Monica Dodge, and I am honored to serve as the Executive Director of the District of Columbia's Office of Education Through Employment Pathways. I am here today to speak in support of [SB 56 - Maryland Longitudinal Data System Center - External Data Sharing With Third-Party Data Centers for Multistate Reporting - Authorization](#),

As this body knows well, the National Capital region, which includes Baltimore, Washington, DC and Richmond is the third largest regional economy in the United States and the seventh largest regional economy in the world. Among the region's 10.2 million residents, 20% cross state lines daily for their jobs. We know that our economy operates as a region, and so as we make decisions about how to respond to economic conditions, it is critical that we are able to examine outcomes as a region as well.

We sit at an extremely exciting moment. For the first time, stakeholders from Maryland, Virginia and the District have agreed to partner to understand educational and economic outcomes in our region, rather than being limited to examining data within our own jurisdictions.

Despite the value of this work, this collaboration will not be possible without the passage of SB 56, which will allow the Maryland Longitudinal Data System (MLDS) Governing Board to authorize the Maryland Longitudinal Data System Center (MLDSC) to share data about Maryland students and workers and match them with similar data from DC and Virginia to facilitate the analysis of K-12, higher education, and workforce pathways across the Capital Region. As a result, this bill will allow for this body and Maryland stakeholders across the state to more fully understand the paths that Maryland students are taking after high school graduation, including those who are employed in the District of Columbia and Virginia, information that has never been available to MLDSC before.

MLDSC is a national model for generating timely and accurate information about student performance that can be used to improve the State's education system and guide decision makers at all levels. I can say confidently that, in the creation of DC's Education Through Employment System, we have greatly benefited from learning from MLDSC's model and are grateful for their partnership. MLDSC is extremely comprehensive in its data coverage, and this project will address the largest gap that MLDSC has faced since its creation – a view into those who leave the state.

This bill will allow for clearer information to make more informed decisions to better serve our region, and I strongly encourage you to pass this legislation. I am happy to answer any questions you may have.