

**Testimony from Anikwenze Ogbue, City Schools Parent, District 43 Resident
SB 554 - Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners - Appointment Process -
Alterations**

Before the Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

3/9/26

Position: UNFAVORABLE

Good morning members of the Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee,

My name is Anikwenze Ogbue and I am a proud resident of District 43A in Baltimore City and a parent of two children who attend our neighborhood zoned school.

SB 554 proposes that Baltimore City become the only school district where appointed school board members are confirmed by the senate, whereas the other 23 counties face no such requirement. Counties receiving larger percentages of state funding (Caroline 82.4%, Somerset 82.3%, Wicomico 80.6%, Allegany 78%) have fully elected and majority elected school boards. Why should Baltimore City be treated differently?

If this bill aligned Baltimore City with fully-elected and majority-elected school boards in the other 23 counties of Maryland and other large majority African American counties in the United States, then I would support it. Unfortunately, SB 554 does not do that. Instead, SB 554 makes our current majority-appointed board an outlier in the state by reducing our autonomy.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the committee to issue an unfavorable report on SB 554.

Sincerely,

Anikwenze Ogbue

Baltimore City Public Schools Parent

District 43A

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Revenue Sources for Public Schools in Fiscal 2025

County	State	Local	<u>Ranking by Percent State</u>		<u>Ranking by Percent Local</u>			
Allegany	78.0%	22.0%	1.	Caroline	82.4%	1.	Worcester	72.9%
Anne Arundel	40.5%	59.5%	2.	Somerset	82.3%	2.	Talbot	67.1%
Baltimore City	76.3%	23.7%	3.	Wicomico	80.6%	3.	Montgomery	64.6%
Baltimore	51.9%	48.1%	4.	Allegany	78.0%	4.	Howard	63.7%
Calvert	38.9%	61.1%	5.	Baltimore City	76.3%	5.	Calvert	61.1%
Caroline	82.4%	17.6%	6.	Dorchester	73.6%	6.	Anne Arundel	59.5%
Carroll	46.9%	53.1%	7.	Washington	70.9%	7.	Queen Anne's	59.4%
Cecil	61.3%	38.7%	8.	Prince George's	65.6%	8.	Kent	59.4%
Charles	55.9%	44.1%	9.	Cecil	61.3%	9.	Carroll	53.1%
Dorchester	73.6%	26.4%	10.	Charles	55.9%	10.	Garrett	50.1%
Frederick	50.5%	49.5%	11.	St. Mary's	54.7%	11.	Frederick	49.5%
Garrett	49.9%	50.1%	12.	Harford	52.3%	12.	Baltimore	48.1%
Harford	52.3%	47.7%	13.	Baltimore	51.9%	13.	Harford	47.7%
Howard	36.3%	63.7%	14.	Frederick	50.5%	14.	St. Mary's	45.3%
Kent	40.6%	59.4%	15.	Garrett	49.9%	15.	Charles	44.1%
Montgomery	35.4%	64.6%	16.	Carroll	46.9%	16.	Cecil	38.7%
Prince George's	65.6%	34.4%	17.	Kent	40.6%	17.	Prince George's	34.4%
Queen Anne's	40.6%	59.4%	18.	Queen Anne's	40.6%	18.	Washington	29.1%
St. Mary's	54.7%	45.3%	19.	Anne Arundel	40.5%	19.	Dorchester	26.4%
Somerset	82.3%	17.7%	20.	Calvert	38.9%	20.	Baltimore City	23.7%
Talbot	32.9%	67.1%	21.	Howard	36.3%	21.	Allegany	22.0%
Washington	70.9%	29.1%	22.	Montgomery	35.4%	22.	Wicomico	19.4%
Wicomico	80.6%	19.4%	23.	Talbot	32.9%	23.	Somerset	17.7%
Worcester	27.1%	72.9%	24.	Worcester	27.1%	24.	Caroline	17.6%
Total	52.4%	47.6%						

Source: Local School Budgets, Department of Legislative Services

School District	School Board Composition	Year Established	Years as an Elected/Appointed Board
Baltimore City	Majority Appointed*	1898	124
Montgomery	Fully Elected	1951	75
Charles	Fully Elected	1970	56
Allegany	Fully Elected	1974	52
Howard	Fully Elected	1974	52
Washington	Fully Elected	1974	52
Carroll	Fully Elected	1976	50
Prince George's	Fully Elected**	1973	36
Kent	Fully Elected	1978	48
Somerset	Fully Elected	1978	48
Garrett	Fully Elected	1982	44
Calvert	Fully Elected	1995	31
Saint Mary's	Fully Elected	1996	30
Frederick	Fully Elected	2002	24
Worcester	Fully Elected	2002	24
Dorchester	Fully Elected	2004	22
Cecil	Fully Elected	2006	20
Talbot	Fully Elected	2006	20
Queen Anne's	Fully Elected	2008	18
Harford	Hybrid/Majority Elected	2010	16
Caroline	Hybrid/Majority Elected	2012	14
Wicomico	Fully Elected	2016	10
Anne Arundel	Fully Elected	2018	8
Baltimore County	Hybrid/Majority Elected	2018	8

Source: Maryland Department of Legislative Services (2026)

*Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners: 124 years Appointed (1898-2022); 4 years Majority Appointed (2022-present) after two Elected seats added.

**Prince George's County Board of Education: 36 years Fully Elected (1973-2001, 2006-2012, 2024-present). Fully Appointed (2002-2006) Hybrid/Majority Elected (2013-2024).

School Boards in the Largest Majority Black Counties (U.S.)

County	School Board Composition	Total Population	% African American
1. Prince George's, MD	Fully Elected	967K	64%
2. Shelby, TN	Fully Elected	930K	54%
3. DeKalb, GA	Fully Elected	764K	55%
4. Baltimore City, MD	Majority Appointed	586K	62%
5. Orleans, LA	Fully Elected	384K	60%
6. Clayton, GA	Fully Elected	298K	73%
7. Montgomery, AL	Fully Elected	229K	59%
8. Hinds, MS	Fully Elected	228K	73%
9. Richmond, GA	Fully Elected	207K	58%
10. Bibb, GA	Fully Elected	157K	56%

School Boards in the Largest Majority Black Counties (Maryland)

County	School Board Composition	Total Population	% African American
1. Prince George's	Fully Elected	967K	64%
2. Baltimore City, MD	Majority Appointed	586K	62%
3. Charles County	Fully Elected	157K	50%

Source: US Census Bureau