

OneMinute Speech Supporting SB4090

From a 49Year Anne Arundel County Teacher and United States Army Reserve Veteran

Distinguished Chair and distinguished members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to speak today. My name is Robert A. Silkworth, and I have served the students of Anne Arundel County as a teacher for 49 years. I am testifying today as a retired 49 year veteran teacher who is in fact a proud product of the school system I served for 49 years, having been raised in Brooklyn Park. In that time, I have watched our school system evolve, grow, and respond to extraordinary challenges. But one truth has remained constant: strong, stable, and effective leadership is essential for our students to **Belong, Grow, and Succeed**.

That is why SB4090 matters.

Our Board of Education members carry immense responsibility—overseeing policy, budget decisions, school safety, academic standards, and the wellbeing of more than 84,000 students. Yet, the compensation for this level of service has not kept pace with the expectations placed upon them. When compensation remains stagnant, we limit who can afford to serve. We risk losing diverse voices, working parents, and community leaders who are deeply connected to our students' lived experiences.

SB4090 ensures that board service is accessible, equitable, and sustainable. It allows us to attract and retain dedicated public servants who can fully invest their time, expertise, and energy into guiding a school system that supports every child.

If we want students to truly belong... if we want them to grow... if we want them to succeed... then we must also support those charged with leading that mission. SB4090 is not a reward—it is an investment in the future of our schools and the children we are all here to serve.

I ask for your support for SB4090. Our students are worth the investment and it will continue to pay dividends.

Thank you.

Robert Silkworth

49 Year Retired Anne Arundel County Teacher

Veteran, United States Army Reserves