My name is Rianna Saslow, and I am here on behalf of the National Parents Union–a network of about 1.6 million parents across the country, including many right here in Maryland.

Parents want their children to have a fair shot at a great education. But today, that opportunity is too often determined by their ZIP code. School attendance boundaries are typically a direct legacy of housing segregation, yet they continue to lock families out of high-quality public schools. This is educational redlining.

Parents are telling us that they feel trapped. Most families can't pay thousands of dollars in private school tuition, they can't afford to move to better districts, and some face massive fines just for trying to get their kids into a better school.

This is not equity. This does not uphold education's role as the great equalizer. And it does not fulfill Maryland's constitutional promise of a "thorough and efficient System of Free Public Schools."

Senate Bill 350 takes an important step toward fixing that by allowing students to attend public schools outside their home county, free of charge.

This is exactly what parents are asking for. According to our polling data, 83% of parents support open enrollment policies. SB350 gives parents the choice they desperately want while keeping children and resources in public schools.

We know this approach works. Similar policies across the country have improved student outcomes, expanded access to advanced coursework, and spurred continuous community engagement.

Parents are not asking for special treatment. They are asking for access — access to opportunity, to quality, and to hope. No child's future should be limited by a boundary line on a map.

On behalf of the National Parents Union and the families we represent, we urge you to pass Senate Bill 350 and take a meaningful step toward a stronger public education system for every child in Maryland.

Thank you for your time and your commitment to Maryland's students.