



A Union of Professionals
AFT-Maryland

5800 Metro Drive, Suite 100 • Baltimore, MD 21215-3226
410/764-3030 • fax: 410/764-3008
md.aft.org

Kenya Campbell
PRESIDENT

LaBrina Hopkins
SECRETARY-TREASURER

**Written Testimony to the Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
SB 350 - Public Schools - Open Enrollment – Policies and Funding
February 27, 2026**

OPPOSE

Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan and Members of the Committee, AFT Maryland opposes SB 350 because the legislation risks undermining the progress of the Blueprint for Maryland's Future, which aims to provide equitable, high-quality education to every child regardless of zip code.

While the intent of SB 350 is to provide families with more options, the proposed funding mechanism creates a unstable financial environment for Maryland's public school districts. By requiring a "sending" county to transfer a portion of its local per-pupil funding to a "receiving" county, the bill effectively drains resources from districts that may already be struggling to maintain their infrastructure and staffing levels.

The bill also allows receiving schools to deny enrollment based on "lack of capacity" or if they cannot meet a child's "special needs." Without a more robust guarantee of inclusion, this policy could lead to de facto segregation, where high-performing schools cherry-pick students and leave more vulnerable populations behind.

Open enrollment often favors families with the means to provide their own transportation, as the bill does not mandate the receiving district to provide transit for out-of-county students. This creates a tiered system where only families with means can realistically exercise the choice provided by the bill, while low-income students may remain in underfunded sending districts.

Public schools operate on high fixed costs, such as building maintenance, utilities, and transportation routes. The exit of students does not proportionately decrease these overhead costs, leaving the students who remain in their home districts with fewer resources and potentially larger class sizes as the local tax base is diverted elsewhere.

Instead of creating a competitive market that treats students as "market share," the state should double down on its commitment to fully funding every local school system so the best school for every child is the one in their own neighborhood. Again, we ask for an unfavorable report.

