



**SB 070 - Adult Education - High School Diploma Pathways –
GED Option Pilot Program and MDiplomaWorks Pathway
Education Energy Environment Committee
1/28/27- Position: Favorable**

The Maryland Out of School Time Network (MOST) is a statewide organization dedicated to closing opportunity gaps by expanding both the quantity and quality of afterschool and summer learning opportunities for school-aged young people. MOST also serves as the backbone organization for the Maryland Coalition for Community Schools and MENTOR Maryland | DC.

Maryland's current policies that prohibit GED instruction during traditional school hours unintentionally leave too many overage and under-credited youth without viable pathways to graduation and postsecondary success. These young people often face complex academic, economic, and personal barriers that make traditional high school completion unrealistic without additional flexibility and support.

SB 070 offers a promising solution by allowing GED instruction to occur during the school day and by pairing academic recovery with career-connected learning and Industry-Recognized Credentials. This integrated approach better meets students where they are, increases engagement, and creates clear on-ramps to employment, post-secondary education, or training. Importantly, it also supports the Blueprint for Maryland's Future goal of having 40 percent of Maryland students earn Industry-Recognized Credentials.

As the GED Option Pilot moves forward, MOST encourages the inclusion of a structured mentoring component. Research and practice consistently show that mentoring significantly improves outcomes for opportunity youth by providing consistent adult support, academic encouragement, and career navigation.

SB 070 represents a thoughtful and necessary step toward creating more equitable, flexible, and effective pathways for Maryland's young people. MOST respectfully urges the Committee to issue a **favorable report** on SB 070.

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