

Testimony Opposing SB0903
Education - Engagement Policies and School Compact
(Maryland Public Education Parental Partnership Act)

UNFAVORABLE

March 2, 2026

The Honorable Chair Senator Brian J. Feldman, Vice Chair Senator Cheryl C. Kagan, and esteemed members of the Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee:

I am writing to ask you to vote no on Senate Bill 903 because it overburdens school personnel, seeks to expand the limits on parental rights with respect to education, and would permit gender and sex discrimination.

The procedural hoops contemplated by this bill would overburden educators and administrators who are already stretched thin by a wide variety of tasks, in addition to fulfilling their primary obligation to teach students. Parents already have sufficient opportunities to provide input and obtain information about what their children are learning in Maryland schools. Parents unsatisfied with the present level of involvement should explore home schooling as an alternative.

The real danger with this bill is that anti-trans rhetoric is couched as “parents’ rights,” when the underlying motive is to remove from curriculum and materials any references to LGBTQIA+ people and other minority groups. Students need to be able to see themselves in what they are reading and studying as reflection of themselves and their histories. This bill would expand the power of parents complaining about “wokeness” to remove curriculum, programming, activities, and materials from schools featuring figures from underrepresented groups, preventing them from promoting an atmosphere that is welcoming and inclusive for all students. Ultimately, it would harm children by preventing them from learning about the full diversity of our society, including underrepresented groups.

We should not make it easier for intolerant people to overburden educators, artificially narrow the scope of learning, or to promote intolerance in our schools. That is what this bill would do under the guise of parents’ rights. It would also contribute toward an environment in which LGBTQIA+ youth are subjected to discrimination and harassment, which is already occurring at a troubling level throughout our present-day society.

For these reasons, please return an unfavorable report on Senate Bill 903.

Respectfully Submitted,

Melinda Littell

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