

HB1115_SB957 Written Testimony Amy Young-Buckler.p

Uploaded by: Amy Young-Buckler

Position: FAV

My name is Amy Young-Buckler and I am a library media specialist and National Board Certified Teacher in Anne Arundel County. This year is my 28th year teaching. As a veteran educator at the top of my salary scale, the only additional salary I receive comes from my National Board Certification salary enhancement and cost of living increases.

I started my National Board Certification journey in 2008. I was a middle school library media specialist in Prince George's County. I was looking for a professional challenge and had a choice: work towards another Master's Degree or pursue National Board Certification. I chose National Board Certification because I wanted the opportunity to examine my professional practice, understand how my work impacts student achievement, and identify ways to strengthen my teaching to benefit my students. I achieved my National Board Certification after completing all four components in one year. When it was time to renew my certification, I saw it as a new challenge - I was teaching in a different school district and teaching elementary students. This would give me a new and different challenge - comparing my past practice with older students to my newer practice with elementary students. I achieved my Maintenance of Certification in 2018, a year before my initial certification expired in 2019.

In the spring of 2024, AACPS teachers received information about the Career Ladder and how the salary enhancements would work for National Board Certified teachers. I was excited when I heard that not only would I be receiving the \$10,000 salary enhancement for my initial certification but would also be eligible for an additional enhancement of \$8,000 because I had maintained my certification with my renewal in 2019. My excitement was diminished in October 2024 when the FAQ about the Career Ladder was shared. In that FAQ, I learned that because my MOC had been completed prior to December 2021, I would ONLY be eligible for the \$10,000 salary enhancement as a National Board Certified teacher.

What does this mean? That means that other teachers that have the same job that I have, that have the same license that I have, the same years of experience that I have, and have the same certification that I have started making \$8,000 more this school year (2025-2026) than me simply because of when they achieved National Board Certification and when they completed their maintenance of certification. For me, that means a loss of income of \$40,000 between this school year and the 2030-2031 school year; the next time I would be eligible for a salary enhancement if I renew my NBCT in 2029. These enhancements are counted as salary and factor into our pensions. Does that seem fair?

In December, the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards released a Policy Guidance Memorandum that states that National Board Certified Teachers that currently hold a 10 year MOC should be recognized as having completed the equivalent of two 5 year MOC cycles. I am asking that the committee vote to move HB1115/SB957 out of committee for a full vote by the legislature this session. I am asking you to recognize the hard work of National Board Certified Teachers who started this process long before the current financial incentives. According to NBPTS Policy Guidance Memorandum, if adopted by the Maryland Legislature through HB1115/SB957, I should be eligible for two additional salary enhancements - \$8,000 for the first five year MOC and \$7,000 for the second five year MOC. This salary enhancement would be a boon to my family and a boost to my retirement savings.

Teaching is a demanding career. Educators who have worked to achieve National Board Certification and have put in the work to maintain that certification should be rewarded for their hard work, no matter when they achieved it. Too much time and energy is spent on trying to recruit new teachers; our veteran educators need to know that their knowledge, experience, and expertise is valued. Money talks.

SB0957_Zimmerman_FAV (1).pdf

Uploaded by: Charles Zimmerman

Position: FAV

March 13, 2026

Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

2 West Miller Senate Office Building

Annapolis, Maryland 21041

Dear Senator Brian J. Feldman and members of the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee,

My name is Charles Zimmerman and I am a National Board Certified Teacher who works in Anne Arundel County Public Schools. I am writing to offer my strong support to bill SB 0957, which includes salary enhancements to all National Board Certified Teachers.

I achieved National Board Certification in Music in the 2009 school year. Since achieving, I have supported numerous other Maryland educators in achieving National Board Certification through active mentoring and support. All of the educators that I have supported are on the newer Maintenance of Certification (MOC) system, where I am still on the older recertification program with 10-year renewal. Most of the educators that I have supported in achieving National Board certification will complete the MOC process twice leading to salary enhancements of an additional \$8,000 and \$7,000 dollars, before I receive any additional salary for any recertification under current law. I know there are many educators in the same situation as I and this bill will correct unfairness to those educators that were at the forefront of National Board Certification in Maryland.

Furthermore, most of the educators that are on the 10-year renewal cycle for National Board Certification are senior teachers who are the educator-leaders in our school systems across the state of Maryland. The passage of this bill would support those senior educators and continue to encourage strong teacher retention among some of the most highly qualified and experienced teachers in our state.

I urge the committee to give a favorable report to Bill SB 0957 and continue to support National Board Certified teachers in the state of Maryland.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Charles Zimmerman

1330 Huntover Drive

Odenton, MD 21113

cezimmerman1@aacps.org

NBC bill support SB957.pdf

Uploaded by: Dana Manojlovic

Position: FAV

March 13, 2026

House Ways and Means Committee

130 Taylor House Office Building

Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Dear Senators Gile and Simonaire and Members of the Ways and Means Committee,

I am writing to respectfully request your support for Bill SB957 that would recognize successful completion of the National Board renewal process under the previous 10-year certification system as equivalent to two Maintenance of Certification (MOC) cycles. Educators who completed renewal under the prior system should receive the same recognition, eligibility, and financial incentives tied to this status as those who completed certification under the current framework.

I have proudly served as a teacher in Anne Arundel for 25 years. In 2009, I achieved National Board Certification, an accomplishment that represented years of dedication to refining my teaching practice and improving outcomes for my students. In 2019, I completed the rigorous renewal process required under the former 10-year certification system. I was incredibly proud to maintain this distinction and to demonstrate my ongoing commitment to professional growth and excellence in the classroom.

Recently, I was surprised and disappointed to learn that educators who completed their certification under newer guidelines are eligible for financial incentives and recognition that are not extended to those of us who successfully renewed earlier. This has created an unintended inequity in which teachers with fewer years of service in our county receive incentives that are not available to educators who have demonstrated long-term commitment and completed the demanding renewal process.

Teachers who renewed under the 10-year system met rigorous professional standards and demonstrated continued mastery of teaching practice. Recognizing that renewal as equivalent to two MOC cycles would honor the integrity of the work completed under the prior system and ensure fairness among National Board Certified Teachers. It would also reinforce the message that our state values sustained excellence and long-term dedication in the profession.

I respectfully ask for your support in ensuring that educators who renewed their certification under the prior system receive full recognition and eligibility for all incentives tied to Maintenance of Certification. This change would correct an inequity and affirm the value of experienced teachers who have invested decades in serving our students and communities.

Thank you for your time, your leadership, and your continued support of educators. I would be grateful for the opportunity to share more about my experience if it would be helpful.

Sincerely,
Dana Manojlovic'
Crofton Meadows Elementary
Anne Arundel County

dmanojlovic@aacps.org

SB 957 Written Testimony.docx.pdf

Uploaded by: Dawn Gile

Position: FAV

DAWN D. GILE
Legislative District 33
Anne Arundel County

Finance Committee

Chair

Anne Arundel County
Senate Delegation



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THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Senate Bill 957 – Education – Career Ladder – National Board Certification Associated Salary Increases

Mr. Chair, Madam Vice Chair, and Members of the EEE Committee:

Senate Bill 957 addresses a narrow but important technical issue within Maryland’s teacher career ladder system established under the Blueprint for Maryland’s Future.

Under current law, teachers who earn National Board Certification (NBC) receive salary increases as they progress through the career ladder. These incentives are intended to recognize professional excellence and encourage highly qualified educators to remain in the classroom.

However, when the National Board transitioned from 10-year certifications to a 5-year maintenance cycle, Maryland statute did not fully account for teachers who still hold the earlier 10-year certification structure.

As a result, many veteran teachers who earned their certification under the older system must wait longer than newer NBC teachers before becoming eligible for salary increases tied to certification renewal or maintenance. In effect, the current statute unintentionally delays compensation incentives for some of Maryland’s most experienced educators.

SB 957 corrects this oversight.

The bill clarifies that teachers holding these earlier 10-year National Board Certifications are eligible for the same career ladder salary increases associated with renewal and maintenance of certification. It also establishes the appropriate salary increase structure for those renewals to align with the existing framework used for the 5-year certification cycle.

Importantly, this bill does not create a new incentive program. Rather, it ensures that teachers who earned their certification under the prior system are treated fairly within the framework the General Assembly already established.

According to the Department of Legislative Services, approximately 446 teachers statewide hold these qualifying certifications and have not yet received the maintenance-related salary increases available to other NBC teachers.

The fiscal impact is modest relative to the statewide education budget—estimated at about \$2.4 million annually beginning in FY 2027, shared between the State and local school systems under the existing Blueprint funding formula.

At its core, this bill is about fairness and consistency.

The teachers affected are, by definition, long-serving educators who have demonstrated professional excellence through National Board Certification. They should not be disadvantaged simply because they earned their certification under an earlier system.

By closing this technical gap in statute, SB 957 ensures that Maryland's most accomplished teachers receive the recognition and compensation the career ladder system was designed to provide.

I respectfully request a favorable report on Senate Bill 957.

SB0957 SUPPORT.pdf

Uploaded by: Grace Wilson

Position: FAV



SB0957 – EDUCATION – CAREER LADDER – NATIONAL BOARD CERTIFICATION ASSOCIATED SALARY INCREASES

March 17, 2026

EDUCATION, ENERGY, AND THE ENVIRONMENT

SUPPORT

Grace Wilson, Director of Legislation & Policy (410.440.1758)

Anne Arundel County Public Schools (AACPS) supports **SB0957 – Education – Career Ladder – National Board Certification Associated Salary Increases**. This bill clarifies that teachers who hold a National Board Certification that has a 10-year award period that expires between July 1, 2016, and December 31, 2031, are eligible for the maintenance of certification salary enhancements established by the Blueprint for Maryland's Future (Blueprint).

The Blueprint's enhanced compensation structure, which ties salary enhancements to National Board Certification on a five-year renewal cycle, has created an unintended disparity for accomplished educators. During the initial implementation of the Blueprint, the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards shifted from a 10-year to a 5-year certification cycle. Currently, 116 National Board Certified Teachers (NBCTs) in AACPS alone – and many more across Maryland – hold valid 10-year original or renewal certificates that extend up to 2031. Despite having served for more than five years under their current certification and maintaining their commitment to professional excellence, these educators are ineligible for the salary enhancements established by the Blueprint solely due to the extended validity period of their existing certificates.

This situation contradicts the Blueprint's intent to reward ongoing professional development and creates a two-tiered system among equally qualified NBCTs. Teachers who happened to receive 10-year certificates are ineligible for salary enhancements associated with maintenance of certification through no action of their own, while their colleagues on five-year cycles can access enhanced compensation for the same level of professional achievement.

In December 2025, the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards recognized the successful completion of a National Board Certificate renewal process under the 10-year certification system as equivalent to completion of two consecutive maintenance of certification cycles for all purposes related to recognition and eligibility for state and district incentives tied to maintenance of certification achievement. SB0957 aligns State law with this recognition and ensures that current professional excellence and ongoing development – not the timing of past certification cycles – determines eligibility for enhanced compensation.

Accordingly, AACPS respectfully requests a **FAVORABLE** committee report on SB0957.

SB0957 Steven Testimony.pdf

Uploaded by: Heather Steven

Position: FAV

To the Honorable Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee Members,

My name is Heather Steven, and I am a Social Studies teacher at Broadneck High School in Anne Arundel County Public Schools. I have been a National Board Certified Teacher (NBCT) since 2009 and renewed my certification in 2019 under the 10-year renewal certificate that was the only option available at that time. I am writing to express my concern about an unintended inequity created by the Blueprint for Maryland's Future that negatively affects veteran NBCT teachers like me. This oversight is patently unfair, and Maryland needs to fix it so that teachers are treated equitably. As a 10-year renewal teacher, I am ineligible to receive any sort of renewal bonus until after other teachers who achieved later have received 2 bonuses under the 5-year Maintenance of Certificate (MOC) cycle.

Under the current structure, teachers who renewed under the former 10-year cycle are arbitrarily ineligible for bonuses that will be awarded to teachers who achieved National Board Certification years after we did. As a result, veteran teachers who earned and maintained certification earlier are placed at a financial disadvantage compared with colleagues who certified later.

Because I renewed in 2019 under the 10-year renewal system, I will not be eligible for another renewal bonus until after other teachers—who certified more recently under the current 5-year Maintenance of Certification (MOC) cycle—have already received two recertification bonuses. In practical terms, this means that I will only have the opportunity to recertify once during the time it takes other teachers to earn two rounds of recertification bonuses.

Within the Anne Arundel County Public Schools Career Ladder structure, this discrepancy will result in a loss of \$8,000 per year from the first recertification bonus and an additional \$7,000 per year from the second. This reduced salary will also negatively affect my pension. I anticipate retiring before I would become eligible for the next recertification cycle, meaning I will never have the opportunity to recover these losses.

It is important to note that when I renewed my certification in 2019, the process required the completion of four components, including two videotaped components—work comparable in scope to the initial certification process. Since then, the testing organization Pearson has reduced the renewal cycle from ten years to five and significantly streamlined the process. Renewal now requires approximately half the work for half the duration. In fairness, teachers who completed the more demanding 10-year renewal should be recognized in a way that reflects the equivalent of two renewal cycles.

Unfortunately, rather than benefiting all NBCT teachers equally, the Blueprint's implementation has unintentionally disadvantaged those who achieved certification earlier while elevating the compensation of teachers who obtained it later. When I first learned how this would affect my salary under the AACPS Career Ladder, I contacted the Teachers Association of Anne Arundel County. I was informed that while Maryland law does not require districts to address this inequity, the county had the discretion to do so but chose not to. In October 2024, when the

AACPS Career Ladder required approval by the Blueprint Accountability and Implementation Board, I wrote to every member explaining the impact on early NBCT teachers.

I recognize that the Blueprint requires substantial state investment and that the \$10,000 annual bonus has appropriately encouraged a large number of teachers to pursue National Board Certification. However, when I first achieved certification, the incentives were far smaller. At that time, the State of Maryland provided a \$2,000 annual stipend and AACPS provided \$1,000. Consequently, relatively few teachers pursued certification, and an even smaller number remain under the older 10-year renewal structure.

When I was teaching at Glen Burnie High School, I was the only teacher in the entire school with National Board Certification. After transferring to Broadneck High School, no one in my department held the certification until after 2021. Today there are only about 100 teachers in all of AACPS who fall under the 10-year renewal category. Addressing this inequity would therefore affect a very small number of educators while correcting a significant and unintended disparity.

Since the passage of the Blueprint, I have actively supported colleagues pursuing National Board Certification. I have reviewed and provided feedback on written components for multiple teachers and recorded video lessons for six teachers in my department. By encouraging teachers to pursue certification and leadership opportunities, I have helped foster reflective practice and improved student learning beyond my own classroom. Yet under the current Career Ladder structure, some of the teachers I mentored will ultimately earn more than I will for maintaining the same certification.

This inequity stems from a technical oversight that affects only a small percentage of teachers and could be corrected through targeted legislative action. Addressing this issue would ensure that veteran NBCT teachers are treated equitably and that Maryland continues to value those who have long demonstrated excellence in teaching.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Heather Steven
Social Studies Teacher
Broadneck High School
Anne Arundel County Public Schools

SB 957 FAVORABLE WashCoBdEducation 3-17-26.pdf

Uploaded by: Jamie Brown

Position: FAV



BILL: Senate Bill 957
TITLE: Education – Career Ladder – National Board Certification Associated Salary Increases
HEARING DATE: March 17, 2026
POSITION: FAVORABLE
COMMITTEE: Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
CONTACT: Ms. Jamie Brown, Legislative Representative, 301-766-2946

Washington County Board of Education supports Senate Bill 957 as introduced, which seeks to ensure adequate state and local funding for salary increases to a targeted group of National Board Certified (NBC) teachers.

Washington County Public Schools (WCPS) employs 173 NBC teachers. Beginning on July 1, 2022, the Blueprint for Maryland's Future required (Blueprint) school systems to enhance the salary of NBC teachers by \$10,000 and an additional \$7,000 if the NBC teacher is teaching at a low-performing school as identified by the Washington County Board of Education in accordance with the Blueprint. However, the salary enhancement for recertification under the Blueprint is only for teachers who recertify after July 1, 2022; it does not contemplate salary enhancements for those NBC teachers who recertified prior to July 1, 2022. Senate Bill 957 would correct this inequity which affects many NBC teachers statewide and which some local boards of education have tried to correct when financially able.

To address the inequity issue locally, Washington County Board of Education entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Washington County Teachers Association to provide the salary increase for WCPS NBC teachers who recertified prior to July 1, 2022. The Board of Education committed to using limited general funds to provide the salary increase under the MOU. Senate Bill 957 would provide dedicated state and local funding to support the salary increase for this group of NBC teachers freeing up already limited general funds that can then be redirected to student needs. It would also ensure that all local boards of education, not only those with financial capacity, can address the inequity created by the Blueprint.

Washington County Board of Education supports an increase in state and local funding so that all NBC teachers across the state, regardless of their year of recertification, can receive the salary enhancement(s) mandated by §6-1009 of the Education Article for those certified after July 1, 2022. Senate Bill 957 promotes fairness, consistency, and equity for all NBC teachers.

Washington County Board of Education supports Senate Bill 957 and requests the Ways and Means Committee to issue a favorable report.

Thank you.

Cc: Washington County Board of Education Members
Washington County Delegation to the Maryland General Assembly
Dr. David T. Sovine, Superintendent
Dr. Gary Willow, Deputy Superintendent
Mr. Jeffrey Proulx, Chief Operating Officer

SB0957 Testimony.pdf

Uploaded by: Jessica Lane

Position: FAV

To the members of the General Assembly,

I am writing today on behalf of the educators who are affected by the discrepancy between the 10 year and the 5 year NBC maintenance of certificate. I understand this was an oversight by the blueprint and it is simply unfair to veterans like me. I achieved in 2011, when it was very difficult to achieve a National Board Certification. In 2021, I recertified for another 10 years. During my initial certification and my renewal the process was much more rigorous and involved than it is now. Unfortunately, now that the blueprint has passed, the people who were grandfathered in for 10 years are unfairly left out of the maintenance of certification enhancement. I do not have the opportunity to renew until 2031 (two years before my retirement). Therefore, I am advocating for this bill to pass so that we can be treated equally like the people who achieved after us who have the opportunity to renew every five years. In fact, some educators will have gone through the MOC cycle twice before my next recertification. The fact of the matter is, the level of rigor that veteran National Board Certified teachers endured when educators of my year and before me renewed should speak for itself. Please consider passing this bill and make this fair and equal for those of us who have mentored so many and will continue to do so in the years to come.

Jessica Lane

Laura Williams - SB957 Testimony.pdf

Uploaded by: Laura Williams

Position: FAV

Laura Williams, NBCT Early Adolescence Mathematics
Math Teacher, Chesapeake High School
Testimony: SB957

Dear Whomever It May Concern:

I am writing to show my support for SB957. My name is Laura Williams, and I have been a math teacher in AACPS for 28 years. I grew up attending Ft. Smallwood Elementary, Chesapeake Bay Middle, and Chesapeake High, graduating in 1993. I then went to Towson to work toward my life-long goal of becoming a teacher. I graduated from TU in 1998 and began working immediately. I have been working in AACPS since 1998, and my children now attend Chesapeake High as well. I take deep pride in my work, and I have been loyal to AACPS since the beginning of my career. I care about the community and work tirelessly to do my job to the best of my ability, having supported thousands of students along the way.

I earned my Master's degree in 2004, and then I achieved National Board Certification in 2007. I achieved it when you had to complete all four portions of the certification process in the same year. It was a grueling process, writing pages upon pages as I reflected upon my teaching, taking videos of my lessons and analyzing them, compiling student work that supported the effectiveness of my teaching. I did this back before you could split the process up into parts. There were also no Professional Learning Facilitators (PLF) to help us through the process as there are now. It was an intense amount of work to complete, especially when still teaching full time, but the process taught me to really reflect on my teaching, and I was rewarded by achieving NBC status. At that time, I earned an additional \$4,000 per year for holding this certification. \$2000 was awarded from the state and \$2000 was awarded from the county. That was quickly reduced to only \$3000 just a short time later. That was the first time the monetary incentive was reduced from what we were told it would be.

Eight years later, it was time for me to renew my certification (so that it would be completed in the 10-year time frame). Even though AACPS pay scales had been frozen for quite some time, and I lost a lot of money, I still stayed loyal to AACPS and went through the process of renewing my National Board Certification. During the renewal, I again had to complete four components. I had to describe four Professional Growth Experiences (PGEs) I had since my initial certification. Again, I wrote pages and pages describing the effectiveness of my teaching and its impact on student learning. Again, I videotaped my lessons, watched them as I analyzed and reflected on my teaching. Again, I compiled student work demonstrating their learning. Now, at this time, AACPS was starting to offer some support and assistance with the NBC process, but not to the extent that there is today. In 2017, I renewed my National Board Certification.

Since then, the Blueprint for MD Schools was developed and adopted. This requires that teachers maintain their National Board Certification every 5 years, rather than every 10 years. Teachers that completed renewal before December 2021 have been told that they are not eligible for the Maintenance of Certification increases, which is absolutely inequitable. AACPS

is all about equity, and this is an area where that is severely lacking. After completing my renewal, I even served as a Professional Learning Facilitator, helping other teachers to achieve NBC, yet, I am not eligible for the increases that Maintenance of Certification (MOC) is now offering. The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) has even recently acknowledged that the renewal process is equivalent to TWO maintenance of certifications. (The MOC is comprised of two components, compared to the four components of the renewal process). Below is a screenshot from a memorandum from the NBPTS on 12/10/2026:

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT the National Board hereby recognizes successful completion of the Renewal process under the prior 10-year certification system as equivalent to completion of two consecutive MOC cycles for all purposes related to recognition, reporting, and eligibility for state and district incentives tied to MOC achievement.

National Board for Professional Teaching Standards

This means that I should be earning an additional \$15,000 (+ \$8000 for the first MOC and \$ 7000 for the second MOC), yet I am earning none of that additional money. At the same time, a teacher that achieved an MOC after 2021, a teacher that I may very well have helped through the process when I was a PLF, will be eligible for that increase before I will. HOW IS THIS FAIR OR EQUITABLE? I have stayed loyal to AACPS through salary scale freezes and a salary scale collapse. I have worked to make it to the top of the salary scale, which is only 25 years, even though retirement doesn't come until 30 years. The top of the scale isn't eligible for step increases, and the COLAs don't cover cost increases on almost everything now. At this time, I am only earning the additional \$10,000 for holding my NBC. If I achieve maintenance of certification this year, I won't find out until December 2026, and the additional \$8000 wouldn't even go into effect until the beginning of the 2027-2028 school year. I should be earning that money (and the additional \$7000) NOW. Recognizing the renewal process as the equivalent of TWO MOCs, and awarding us that money retroactively, is the only way to make this situation EQUITABLE, FAIR, and RIGHT. Please continue to advocate for this bill and I hope it is passed in the very near future.

I have gained a lot of experience in my 28 years of working for AACPS. I want to continue teaching and serving my students and other members of the community. I work extremely hard everyday, year in and year out, to ensure that my students reach their full potential. I am only asking for what is FAIR. I am asking on behalf of myself and the many other educators who achieved during the same time frame that I did. The ones who have completed the work, but are being told they are not eligible for the pay increases. If you truly value your educators, please SHOW us. This would be one way to do so.

Thank you so much for your time and consideration!

Sincerely,

Laura Williams, NBCT
Chesapeake High School

SB957.pdf

Uploaded by: Lauren Long

Position: FAV

Dear Senator Gile and Members of the Energy, Education, and Environment Committee,

I am writing today on behalf of educators who are affected by the discrepancy between the 10-year and 5-year National Board Certification (NBC) maintenance cycles. I understand this situation was likely an unintended oversight within the Blueprint, but it has created an inequity for veteran National Board Certified teachers like me.

I initially achieved National Board Certification in 2009, at a time when the process was especially rigorous and challenging. In 2019, I successfully renewed my certification for another 10-year cycle. Both my original certification and renewal required a far more extensive and demanding process than the current system.

Unfortunately, since the passage of the Blueprint, educators like me who are on the 10-year renewal cycle are excluded from receiving the enhancement for maintenance of certification. Because my next renewal opportunity is not until 2029, I am unable to access the same opportunities available to teachers who certified after us and who now renew every five years. This creates an unintended inequity between veteran National Board Certified teachers and those who entered the process more recently.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge you to support and pass this bill so that educators on the 10-year cycle can receive equitable recognition and compensation for maintaining our certification. The level of rigor that veteran National Board Certified teachers experienced—both during our initial certification and renewal—demonstrates our long-standing commitment to the profession.

Please consider passing this bill to ensure fairness for those of us who have dedicated our careers to mentoring colleagues, supporting students, and strengthening the teaching profession. We remain committed to continuing that work for many years to come.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Lauren Long

SB957.pdf

Uploaded by: Lauren Rakvic

Position: FAV

March 13, 2026

House Ways and Means Committee

130 Taylor House Office Building

Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Senator Gile, Senator Simonaire, and Members of the Ways and Means Committee,

I am respectfully requesting your support for Bill **SB 957**, which would recognize and justly compensate educators who completed the National Board Certification renewal process under the previous 10-year certification system.

I began teaching in Anne Arundel county in 2005 and worked diligently to earn my initial National Board Certification in 2009. I renewed my certification in 2019, because I understood the value in continuing to push myself to examine my teaching practices and better myself as an educator in order to help my students. I was, and still am, in one of the lower performing schools in our county, and I am proud to use my expertise to enhance my students' learning.

Recently, it has come to my attention that other teachers who hold my same level of certification are receiving a greater level of compensation simply because they completed their certification under different guidelines. As an experienced teacher in the county, I am disheartened by the inequity of this policy. All National Board Certified teachers have met the same rigorous standards, and we should be compensated as such.

The National Board recognizes successful completion of the Renewal process under the prior 10-year certification system as equivalent to completion of two consecutive MOC cycles. Therefore, we should be compensated in the same manner as those who are on the current MOC cycle.

I respectfully urge you to support **SB 957**, which would ensure fair compensation for teachers who completed the National Board Certification renewal process under the previous 10-year certification cycle.

Sincerely,
Lauren Rakvic
Eastport Elementary
Anne Arundel County

lprakvic@aacps.org

SB0957.LindseyElls.pdf

Uploaded by: Lindsey Ells

Position: FAV

Chair and Members of the Ways & Means Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to speak in support of Senate Bill 957. My name is Lindsey Ells, and I am a veteran teacher who has spent many years in the classroom and now serve as a Literacy Teacher. I have also continued to grow professionally through the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) certification process.

Senate Bill 957 addresses an unintended issue that arose from the original Maryland Blueprint legislation. While the Blueprint has created many positive changes for students and educators, it has also left a small group of veteran teachers—like myself—without recognition for the work required to achieve National Board Certification.

The number of teachers affected is relatively small, so the cost to correct this oversight would be limited. However, the impact on those educators is meaningful. National Board Certification requires years of dedication, reflection, and documented evidence of effective teaching and student learning.

Teachers who complete this process often take on leadership roles in their schools. We mentor colleagues, support new teachers, and help guide others through the National Board process, strengthening the professional culture the Blueprint aims to build.

Because of how the law was implemented, some experienced teachers are not receiving recognition that reflects their accomplishments. Senate Bill 957 offers a fair and practical way to address this gap.

This bill does not create a major new cost for the state. Instead, it corrects a narrow policy issue affecting a small number of highly accomplished educators who have already demonstrated their commitment to excellence.

Passing Senate Bill 957 would show that Maryland values experienced teachers and the high standards that strengthen our schools. It ensures the Blueprint's goal of elevating the teaching profession is applied fairly to those who have already invested so much in that work.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,
Lindsey Ells, NBCT

NBCT testimony.pdf

Uploaded by: Lisa Manzi

Position: FAV

To the Members of the General Assembly,

I am writing to you as a long-serving National Board Certified Teacher and a committed educator in our state to request your support in addressing an unintended inequity affecting veteran NBCTs who certified under the original, more rigorous 10-year cycle.

I first earned National Board Certification in 2007 and renewed my certification in 2017, both under the former system, which required twice the amount of work and a significantly more extensive submission than today's cycle. Under that system, each certification lasted 10 years. I am currently completing my first Maintenance of Certification (MOC) under the new 5-year system; however, despite maintaining continuous NBCT status for nearly two decades, I will **not** be eligible for a pay increase until the 2027–2028 school year, at the very end of my current 10-year certification window.

This situation is not due to lack of effort or a lapse in certification, but rather an unintended consequence of the transition from the 10-year renewal cycle to the current 5-year MOC and the current Blueprint legislation that only recognizes teachers with MOC for salary enhancement. Teachers who happened to renew their certification shortly *after* me under the new system are already eligible for additional pay increases—and some will reach their second MOC while I remain locked in my 10-year cycle. For example, several NBCTs I currently mentor are working on their second MOC, while I am still completing my first, even though I have been Board Certified far longer.

I serve as the lead mentor for MOC candidates and have supported teachers through the recertification and MOC process for the past nine years. I see firsthand how unevenly this policy change impacts veteran NBCTs. Only a limited number of teachers fall into this gap, but the consequences are significant and deeply unfair.

A colleague of mine provides another clear example of the issue: she renewed her certification in the very last year before the 5-year MOC cycle began. Because of this timing—again, through no fault of her own—she cannot complete a MOC until her 8th year of the current 10-year cycle and will not receive a pay increase until the end of her term. By that time, some teachers who

certified *after* her will have completed their third MOC and will be earning significantly higher pay.

I am certain this disparity was not intentional. However, the current system elevates the earnings of more recently certified teachers simply because they fell into a different renewal timeline, while veteran NBCTs who completed a more rigorous, more time-consuming process are left behind. This undermines both fairness and the long-term commitment that the Blueprint and National Board Certification is designed to recognize.

I respectfully request that you consider supporting SB957 that would:

1. Ensure equitable pay progression for NBCTs who certified under the former 10-year system, recognizing the rigor and length of their certification periods.
2. Address the small but significantly impacted group of veteran NBCTs who have been unintentionally disadvantaged.
3. Honor the continuity of service and sustained excellence shown by teachers who have maintained certification across system changes.

Veteran NBCTs have dedicated years—often decades—to meeting high professional standards and supporting colleagues in achieving them. We respectfully ask for fairness in how the state recognizes and compensates this work.

Thank you sincerely for your service to our community and for your attention to this matter. I would welcome the opportunity to meet with you or provide additional information.

With gratitude,

Lisa Manzi

Teacher, Student Instructional Support

Mills Parole E.S.

National Board Certified Teacher (2007–2017, 2017–2027)

SB957 Support.pdf

Uploaded by: Mary Pitta

Position: FAV

Position: FAVORABLE

Bill: SB 957 – Education – Career Ladder – National Board Certification Associated Salary Increases

Committee: Senate Education, Energy and the Environment Committee

Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Mary Pitta, I teach at Severn River Middle School in Anne Arundel County and respectfully submit this testimony in **support of SB 957**.

I first earned my National Board Certification in 2007 and successfully renewed it in 2016. As one of the early National Board Certified Teachers in my county, I was frequently asked to share my expertise with other educators. Administrators and colleagues recognized the value of the certification and the experience it represents.

Before our district established formal support roles such as Right Start Advisors, I was asked to mentor new teachers. I gladly took on this responsibility because I cared deeply about helping them succeed, helping their students thrive, and supporting the strength of our county's music program. At the time, there was no additional compensation for this work. I did it because I believed in supporting my colleagues and because the professional respect associated with National Board Certification meant something.

I am currently pursuing another renewal of my certification. As part of this process, I am being mentored by a colleague who first achieved National Board Certification in 2019 and renewed in 2023. I value their support and the collaborative nature of this process. However, this experience has highlighted an unintended inequity in the current system. My colleague currently receives an additional \$18,000 per year associated with their certification. Despite having first earned National Board Certification in 2007 and maintaining it through renewal since 2016—twelve more years of certification than my mentor—I receive \$8,000 less per year for the same credential. The difference is not in commitment, experience, or dedication to the profession, but simply in the timing of when the certification was earned. SB 957 would help correct this type of disparity and ensure that long-standing National Board Certified Teachers continue to receive the recognition and compensation their expertise represents.

National Board Certification represents years of experience, deep reflection on teaching practice, and a commitment to continual professional growth. Teachers who pursue and maintain this certification strengthen their schools, mentor colleagues, and improve outcomes for students. Maryland has invested deeply in strengthening its educator workforce. Ensuring that long-standing National Board Certified Teachers continue to receive the recognition associated with this rigorous credential reflects that commitment.

Please support this bill to ensure that the teachers who stepped forward early to pursue National Board Certification—and who have since led, mentored, and encouraged others to follow that path—are fairly recognized and compensated for their expertise.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Mary Pitta
408 Hartman Drive
Severna Park, Maryland 21146

mpitta12@gmail.com

410-440-8275

SB957_MSEA_Lemle_FAV.pdf

Uploaded by: Paul Lemle

Position: FAV

FAVORABLE
Senate Bill 957
Education - Career Ladder - National Board Certification Associated Salary
Increases

Senate Committee on Education, Energy, and the Environment
March 17, 2026

Paul Lemle
MSEA President

The Maryland State Education Association supports Senate Bill 957, which would remedy an oversight in the statute on teacher salary increases established in the Blueprint for Maryland's Future. Currently, the law unintentionally penalizes educators who hold an earlier version of National Board Certification (NBC), delaying their salary increases. This bill adds recognition of educators who have renewed a 10-year NBC and codifies the formal acknowledgement by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) that their NBC renewal is equivalent to two maintenance of certification cycles for a 5-year NBC.

MSEA represents 75,000 educators and school employees who work in Maryland's public schools, teaching and preparing our almost 900,000 students so they can pursue their dreams. MSEA also represents 44 local affiliates in every county across the state, and our parent affiliate is the 3-million-member National Education Association (NEA).

Prior to 2021, teachers who held NBC were required to renew their certification every 10 years. In 2021, NBPTS replaced renewal requirements with maintenance of certification (MOC), a streamlined process that takes place every 5 years. The Blueprint for Maryland's Future statute that outlines salary increases for NBC teachers is based on the 5-year MOC system, and salary increases are awarded each time a teacher completes an MOC cycle. However, experienced teachers who still hold the original 10-year NBC are delayed in receiving salary increases because the law does not account for their version of the NBC.

NBPTS has formally recognized that a 10-year NBC renewal is equivalent to two 5-year MOC cycles. On November 13, 2025, the NBPTS Board of Directors approved the following policy guidance (emphasis ours):

Recognition of Renewal as Equivalent to Two MOC Cycles

*Educators who completed the Renewal process under the prior 10-year system will now have that accomplishment recognized by the National Board as **equivalent to completing two consecutive MOC cycles**. This guidance affords states the opportunity to authorize MOC-based salary incentives for NBCTs on 10-year renewal certificates once they reach the five-year threshold during the middle of their active certificate period.*

This bill would ensure that a 10-year NBC is treated as equivalent to two 5-year MOC cycles when awarding salary incentives. According to NBPTS, there were 859 teachers in Maryland who held a renewed 10-year NBC as of October 2025. Since 10-year NBCs are no longer issued, this oversight affects a finite number of educators, but for those teachers, it is an issue of fairness and morale. The affected teachers are, by definition, long-serving educators who have held National Board Certification – a distinction for professional excellence – for over a decade. These are the very educators the Blueprint seeks to reward and retain.

Educators should not be arbitrarily penalized for having earned their NBC early. We thank the sponsor for collaborating on amendments to clarify the timeline for awarding equivalent salary increases, and **we strongly urge the committee to remedy this unintentional yet impactful oversight by issuing a favorable report on Senate Bill 957.**

MD_Senate NBPTS Testimony MAR 2026.docx.pdf

Uploaded by: Sarah Pinsky

Position: FAV

TESTIMONY FOR SB 957
Education - Career Ladder -
National Board Certification Associated Salary Increases

Bill Sponsor: Senators Gile and Simonaire

Committee: Education, Energy, and the Environment

Organization Submitting: National Board for Professional Teaching Standards

Person Submitting: Sarah Pinsky, Senior Director for Policy

Position: FAVORABLE

The National Board strongly supports SB 957 and urges a favorable report.

In 2021, the Blueprint was established to transform the state's public education into a world-class system. As part of the Blueprint, Maryland incentivizes accomplished teaching. This is done, in part, through salary increases for National Board Certified Teachers.

Your investment in accomplished teaching has led to significant growth in the number of National Board Certified Teachers (NBCTs) across the state. Maryland now leads the nation in the number of teachers earning National Board Certification each year, with more than 1,400 teachers marking this achievement in 2025, and tens of thousands of students across the state benefiting from them.

As part of the Blueprint, Maryland teachers who achieve National Board Certification receive a \$10,000 salary increase, with those working in a low-performing school receiving an additional \$7,000. Teachers may subsequently earn salary increases by successfully extending their National Board Certification before the end of the 5-year validity period through the Maintenance of Certification process.

The salary increases associated with Maintenance of Certification are locally bargained. However, the law provides that the state will pay a share of these payments for the first three times a teacher extends their National Board certification. This typically occurs 5, 10, and 15 years after a teacher first earned their initial National Board Certification.

This schedule of salary increases aligns with the current 5-year validity period for National Board certificates. However, prior to 2017, the National Board issued 10-year certificates. Through 2021, Maryland NBCTs with a 10-year certificate were eligible to extend it for another 10 years. This has created an unintended consequence for Maryland National Board Certified Teachers who currently hold a 10-year certificate.

Up to 900 Maryland NBCTs still hold these older 10-year certificates. This makes them ineligible to complete Maintenance of Certification and access the associated salary increase at the 5-year mark. Under current law, these Board-certified teachers are not eligible for a salary increase until after 10 years, while their peers are eligible for an increase after 5 years.

This situation is a temporary one that will be phased out by 2031, because all National Board Certified Teachers will complete the Maintenance of Certification upon the expiration of their current 10-year certificate and move to a 5-year certificate.

The National Board remains firmly committed to ensuring equitable treatment for all accomplished educators. At its meeting on November 13, 2025, the National Board's Board of Directors approved policy guidance that educators who renewed their certificates under the prior 10-year system will now have that accomplishment recognized by the National Board as equivalent to completing two consecutive 5-year Maintenance of Certifications.

This guidance affords states, like Maryland, the opportunity to authorize salary incentives for NBCTs on 10-year renewal certificates once they reach the five-year mark during the middle of their valid certificate period.

We support this bill and recommend a **FAVORABLE** report in committee.

Solomon_Favorable_SB957.pdf

Uploaded by: Shaina Solomon

Position: FAV

Testimony in Support of SB957

Before the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

March 13, 2026

Dear Chair and Members of the Committee,

I am writing in support of Maryland House Bill 1115, which addresses an unintended consequence affecting educators maintaining certification through the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards Maintenance of Certification (MOC) process.

I have been a National Board Certified Teacher since 2007, and I know firsthand the rigor and commitment required to earn and maintain this certification. National Board Certified Teachers are often leaders in their schools—mentoring colleagues, supporting teachers pursuing certification, and helping strengthen instructional practice for students.

Due to the timing of national policy changes to the 10-year MOC cycle, some teachers who are actively maintaining their certification are not currently being recognized the same way under Maryland policy. This gap was clearly not the intent of the original legislation, and it creates an unfair situation for a small group of experienced educators.

Without a correction, teachers who are fully maintaining their certification may lose the recognition the state intended to provide for this professional accomplishment, despite continuing to meet the same rigorous standards.

HB 1115 provides a practical and targeted fix to ensure that teachers who continue to meet the high standards of the National Board are recognized appropriately. The fiscal impact is limited, and correcting this issue aligns with Maryland's commitment through the Blueprint for Maryland's Future to value and compensate accomplished educators.

Passing HB 1115 is a matter of fairness and sends an important message that Maryland supports veteran teachers who continue to invest in their professional excellence and mentor the next generation of educators.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

Shaina Solomon

National Board Certified Teacher (since 2007)

Anne Arundel County, Maryland

NBPTS testimony (2).pdf

Uploaded by: Sheila Norris

Position: FAV

Chair and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of House Bill 1115. My name is Sheila Norris, and I am a veteran teacher who has dedicated many years to highly effective classroom instruction and ongoing professional growth through the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) certification process.

Senate Bill 957 addresses an unintended consequence of the original Maryland Blueprint legislation. While the Blueprint has created many positive opportunities for students and educators across the state, it has also left a small group of veteran teachers—like myself—without recognition for the extensive work we have done to meet the rigorous standards of National Board Certification.

The teachers affected by this issue are not a large group. Because of that, the fiscal impact of correcting this oversight is limited and predictable. At the same time, the impact on the educators involved is significant. Many of us have spent years pursuing National Board Certification, a process that requires deep reflection, documented evidence of effective teaching, and a sustained commitment to improving student learning.

Veteran teachers who have completed this process often serve as leaders within their schools. We mentor colleagues, support early-career teachers, and help guide others through the National Board process. In many ways, we help build the professional culture that the Blueprint itself seeks to promote.

However, due to the way the current law was implemented, some of these experienced educators are not receiving the recognition that aligns with their accomplishments and contributions. Senate Bill 957 offers a targeted and reasonable solution to this problem.

This legislation does not create a large new expense for the state. Instead, it corrects a narrow gap in policy that affects a small number of highly accomplished teachers who have already demonstrated their commitment to excellence in Maryland's classrooms.

Supporting Senate Bill 957 sends an important message: that Maryland values experienced, highly effective educators and the professional standards that strengthen our schools. It ensures that the goals of the Blueprint—to elevate the teaching profession and support teacher leadership—are applied fairly to those who have already invested so much in that mission.

Thank you for your time and for your consideration of this important bill.

Respectfully,
Sheila Norris, NBCT

SB 957_AIB_LOI.pdf

Uploaded by: Joy Schaefer

Position: INFO



BLUEPRINT FOR
Maryland's Future

Accountability &
Implementation Board

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BILL: Senate Bill 957

TITLE: Education - Career Ladder - National Board Certification Associated Salary Increases

SPONSOR: Senator Gile

HEARING DATE: March 17, 2026

COMMITTEE: Education, Energy, and the Environment

POSITION: INFORMATION

The Accountability and Implementation Board for the Blueprint for Maryland's Future (AIB) submits this **letter of information** for **Senate Bill 957 – Education – Career Ladder – National Board Certification Associated Salary Increases**.

Senate Bill 957, by clarifying the eligibility for teacher salary increases in the State's Career Ladder, provides parity for a specific cohort of teachers who achieved National Board Certification on or before December 31, 2021, whose certification has an expiration date between January 1, 2016 and December 31, 2031, and has a 10-year award period.

The Blueprint for Maryland's Future envisions a high-quality, diverse education system where teachers and leaders are elevated, mentored, and supported to collaborate, specialize, and continuously improve instruction on behalf of world-class outcomes for students. The Blueprint prioritizes National Board Certification (NBC) for teachers because research consistently shows that certification provides numerous benefits to teachers, students, and schools, including increased learning for students.

The goal of the development of the Career Ladder is to provide a rigorous framework for professional development that provides teachers with opportunities to advance professionally, deepen their expertise, and build specializations that enhance student learning, while allowing them to remain closely connected to classroom teaching. Achieving and maintaining NBC is a cornerstone for advancement on the Career Ladder, toward increasing or differentiated responsibility and compensation.



As an incentive to pursue and achieve NBC, the Blueprint provides salary enhancements upon initial award and maintenance of certification (MOC). Initially, the National Board required teachers to renew their certification on a 10-year cycle. In the 2021-2022 school year (SY), with the implementation of the Blueprint, the National Board shifted to a 5-year MOC cycle. However, in (SY)2020-2021, the National Board gave teachers who earned their initial certification the choice to conduct their maintenance of certification on either a 5-year or a 10-year cycle. This created a pay gap between teachers certified with a 10-year MOC on or before December 31, 2021 and those certified with a 5-year MOC after that date.

Notably, the process to maintain certification every 10 years, in comparison to the process to maintain certification every 5 years, is more intensive, more time consuming, and more expensive. In recognition of this, on November 13, 2025, the National Board of Professional Teaching Standards approved the resolution “Recognition of Renewal as Equivalent to Two Maintenance of Certification (MOC) Cycles Policy,” in which the Board recognized “the successful completion of the Renewal process under the prior 10-year certification system as equivalent to completion of two consecutive MOC cycles for all purposes related to recognition, reporting, and eligibility for state and district incentives tied to MOC achievement.” The Board informed the AIB of this resolution and provided corresponding [MOC Policy Equivalency Guidance](#).

We hope that you find this information helpful as you consider **SB 957**. If you would like more information, please contact Joy Schaefer, Government Relations Director at joy.schaefer@maryland.gov or (410) 991-7623.

SB0957 - State Board & MSDE - LOI.docx.pdf

Uploaded by: Stefan Redding-Lallinger

Position: INFO

TO: Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
BILL: Senate Bill (SB) 0957 - Education- Career Ladder - National Board Certification Associated Salary Increases
DATE: March 17, 2026
POSITION: Letter of Information

The State Board of Education and Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) extend this letter of information on Senate Bill (SB) 0957 - Education- Career Ladder - National Board Certification Associated Salary Increases, which provides equitable compensation for National Board Certified Teachers (NBCTs) who earned a 10-year National Board Certificate (NBC) before the establishment of the current five-year NBC. MSDE recognizes the significant professional commitment required to earn and maintain National Board Certification and values the important role NBCTs play in strengthening instruction, supporting teacher leadership, and improving outcomes for Maryland students.

MSDE believes the intent of SB0957 is to ensure parity between educators who completed the older 10-year Renewal process and those completing the current 5-year Maintenance of Certification (MOC). Salary increases should be directed toward educators who have a 10-year NBC that expires between 2026 and 2031. MSDE believes the bill intends to provide a first maintenance salary increase to educators who completed the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) Renewal process between 2016 and 2021, which extended their NBC by ten years to expire between 2026 and 2031.

As currently written, the bill addresses anyone who had a 10-year NBC that expired from 2016 through 2031, which would include seven years of certificates that expired prior to the establishment of the Blueprint for Maryland's Future. Similarly, the current language extends the first salary enhancement to NBCTs who "earned renewal of a 10-year NBC." This language would include a timeframe that precedes the codification of the original statute.

The Department appreciates the sponsor's willingness to meet with MSDE and consider technical feedback on the bill language. During these discussions, MSDE provided input to help ensure the bill more clearly reflects the intended population of teachers and aligns with existing statute and implementation frameworks.

MSDE also recognizes that implementing this measure may have a significant fiscal impact on school systems. Additionally, many local education agencies may have already addressed similar salary considerations for veteran NBCTs through their collective bargaining agreements. While we share the goal of equitable compensation, we also note these practical realities.

The State Board and MSDE respectfully request that you consider this information as you deliberate **SB0957**. For further information, please contact Laurel Cratsley, Interim Executive Director of Government Affairs, at

Laurel.Cratsley@maryland.gov