

To: Chair Jheanelle K. Wilkins, Vice Chair Jessica Feldmark, and Members of the House Ways and Means Committee

From: Matthew Yake

Date: March, 30, 2026

Bill: SB0554 - Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners - Appointment Process - Alterations

Position: Oppose/Unfavorable

Dear Chair Wilkins, Vice Chair Feldmark, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Matthew Yake, I am a resident of Charles Village (21218), and a parent of a Baltimore City school student. I am writing to you today to respectfully request an UNFAVORABLE report for Senate Bill 554.

I am deeply concerned that Senator Antonio Hayes and the Baltimore City Senate Delegation voted to advance SB554 – a bill that would eliminate parent, student, union, elected, and disabled voices from the appointments process. Senator Hayes cites the city school system's reliance on state funding as a reason for increased state oversight. Specious reasoning considering Baltimore City is not unique in this regard; something the senator surely knows.

This bill is opposed by the Baltimore Teacher's Union, the Public School Administrators Supervisors Union, AFSCME Council 3, the Associated Student Congress of Baltimore City, the Parent and Community Advisory Board, the PTA Council of Baltimore City, and the ACLU. Every organization with the earned knowledge and expertise to evaluate this bill stands together in opposition. Baltimore City families need more say in the governance of their schools, not less.

Thank you for your consideration,
Matthew Yake
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