

Testimony in Support of HB 930

Presented to the House Ways and Means Committee

February 26, 2026

One of the most important things we do as a state is provide free, public education to all children in Maryland. I strongly supports HB 930 because it preserves public dollars for the public good, rather than creating new public subsidies for private schools.

My partner and I are choosing to foster and hopefully adopt to grow our family. Seeing the cuts to the public school system scares me, as I do not know if we can both support the higher needs of foster children and afford private school if the public school system continues to receive funding cuts rather than increased funding. I also acknowledge that private schools will ever only benefit a few, even if public money is used to subsidize them. For the sake of equity, the public school system is the best there is even with its flaws.

I very much understand friends who are choosing not to have kids because the cost of raising a family in Maryland continues to grow with inflation, rising energy costs, and rising childcare costs. The only way I see to be equitable about this is to support public programming that benefits any who choose to participate. We need to spread the cost out to those who can most afford it, not cut funding to public programs as the direct result of tax breaks benefiting the wealthy.

HB 930 removes Maryland from two changes that were part of the Republican budget bill Congress passed in July 2025 that could shift more public dollars to private schools.

One new program will give individuals a dollar-for-dollar tax write-off if they “donate” up to \$1,700 to organizations that give students money for private school tuition. This proposal has the potential to funnel billions of public dollars into private schools nationwide. Governors have the choice of whether their states will opt in to this program. HB 930 states that Maryland will not participate.

Federal tax law changes in 2017 and 2025 also expanded the uses of 529 accounts, tax-advantaged savings accounts that were originally intended to help families save for college. HB 930 will maintain the ability of families to get a state tax break on college savings without providing the same bonus for funds used for K-12 private school tuition and other expenses.

Our state is already facing a tough road ahead for maintaining the public education funding that improves our schools and supports the needs of every student. We should preserve our limited public resources to support schools that are open to all.

I ask the committee to make a favorable report on HB 930.