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Budget and Taxation Committee  
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THE SENATE OF MARYLAND  
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The Honorable Jheanelle Wilkins  
The Honorable Jessica Feldmark  
Ways & Means Committee  
House of Delegates  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

March 25<sup>th</sup>, 2026

**Testimony in Support of SB339: Maryland School for the Deaf - Membership of Board of Trustees  
- Alterations**

Chair Wilkins, Vice Chair Feldmark, and distinguished members of the Ways & Means committee,

Senate Bill 339 is a crossfile of Vice Chair Feldmark's HB1052 which has already passed this committee and the House of Delegates unanimously. It will alter the composition of the Board of Trustees of the Maryland School for the Deaf (MSD) from 19 members to 13 members through attrition. Further, the bill will require that at least 7 members be deaf. MSD is Maryland's only public school specializing in the education of deaf and hard-of-hearing students, and has two campuses in Frederick and Columbia.

The administrative leadership team, lead by the Superintendent, oversees the school's day-to-day operations and works to ensure a safe, supportive, and nurturing learning environment for all students.

The Board serves to manage the School at a high level by making oversight and other large governance decisions to ensure the school meets its vision and continues to grow and improve. To be effective, the Board must also be efficient and appropriately sized for purposeful governance. At 19 members, the MSD Board is larger than is typical or necessary for a state

the size of Maryland, which can complicate deliberation, slow decision-making, and diffuse accountability.

A thirteen member board aligns more closely with comparable governing bodies, like the Maryland State Board of Education, which consists of 14 members, as well as schools for the deaf and hard-of-hearing in other states.

A smaller Board promotes more focused engagement, clearer roles and accountability, and stronger alignment with recognized governance best practices while preserving robust representation and oversight. Crucially, by mandating a majority of members are deaf or hard-of-hearing, SB0339 ensures that the Board is reflective and best able to respond to the needs of the population it serves.

I urge a favorable report on SB339.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Karen Lewis Young". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Senator Karen Lewis Young