

WRITTEN TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB1463

Anne Arundel County – Board of Education – Constituent Services Liaison
Position: FAVORABLE

Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Gloria Dent, a retired Army senior leader with 27 years of service and six combat tours. My professional life has been spent delivering mission clarity, structural accountability, and responsive leadership — principles that sit at the heart of why **HB1463** is not only appropriate, but overdue for a system as large and complex as Anne Arundel County Public Schools (AACPS). I submit this written testimony in strong support of **HB1463**, which requires the Anne Arundel County Board of Education to hire a **Constituent Services Liaison** before the 2026–2027 school year and establish the structural capacity needed to meaningfully support families.

HB1463 requires the Anne Arundel County Board of Education to establish and hire a Constituent Services Liaison before the start of the 2026–2027 school year. This position creates a clear, centralized, and accountable point of contact for families navigating Anne Arundel County Public Schools (AACPS). The liaison will serve as the primary connection between the Board of Education and community members, assist families in accessing AACPS services and related supports, engage community partners to advance school system goals, and—critically—must have prior experience in special education to ensure expertise in one of the most complex areas of student support.

This bill is needed because AACPS currently has no unified method for receiving, tracking, and resolving parent and community concerns. Families are routinely redirected between school offices, principals, central office divisions, the superintendent’s office, and even the state, without a consistent process, log, or accountability loop. This is a structural gap, not a personnel issue, and HB1463 provides the solution. With more than 84,000 students, 126 schools, and a budget nearing \$1.9 billion, AACPS is the only larger Maryland school district without a formal constituent services or ombudsman structure—something already standard in Montgomery, Prince George’s, and Howard counties.

Importantly, this need has been documented for years. For three consecutive budget cycles, the Board of Education and community advocates have requested funding for this role at the local level. For three consecutive years, the County Executive has declined to fund it. The problem is not new; the inaction is. State direction is now necessary to ensure the position is finally established.

Without a Constituent Services Liaison, inefficiencies multiply. Staff across the system duplicate work; principals lose instructional leadership time; central office teams are consumed with repetitive casework; families grow frustrated; and public confidence erodes. A liaison reduces

friction, strengthens coordination, and expands transparency. The cost is minimal relative to a \$1.9 billion budget, and the return—in efficiency, clarity, and trust—is significant.

HB1463 ensures families have a clear, equitable, and reliable path to help, regardless of ZIP code, background, or familiarity with the school system. It brings Anne Arundel County into alignment with statewide best practices and finally implements a position that has been repeatedly requested but never funded. This bill strengthens service, accountability, and communication in a system where these qualities matter most.

For these reasons, HB1463 deserves a **Favorable Report**.

Sincerely,

Gloria Dent
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