

JAMILA J. WOODS  
Legislative District 26  
Prince George's County

Judiciary Committee  
Criminal Subcommittee  
Chair, Juvenile Subcommittee  
Public Safety Subcommittee



The Maryland House of Delegates  
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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

**Testimony for HB140** - *County Boards of Education and Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners - Vacancy Procedures - Alterations*

**Good afternoon, Chair Wilkins, Vice Chair Feldmark, and esteemed members of the Ways and Means Committee.**

My name is Delegate Jamila Woods, and I am here today to request a favorable report on **House Bill 140**, legislation that creates clear, transparent, and consistent procedures for filling vacancies on county boards of education and the Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners.

Marylanders expect stability and accountability in the leadership of their public school systems. When a school board seat becomes vacant, families, educators, and students deserve a process that is predictable, timely, and open to the public. Yet vacancy procedures differ widely across jurisdictions, and in some cases the public has limited visibility into how a replacement is selected or how long a seat may remain vacant.

House Bill 140 establishes a statewide framework that strengthens democratic legitimacy for elected school board seats while ensuring continuity of governance. When an elected vacancy occurs early enough in the election cycle, the bill requires the seat to be filled by voters at the next general election. When timing makes an election impractical, or when no qualified candidate files, the bill requires the board to fill the vacancy through a transparent public process. That process includes advertising the vacancy, reviewing resumes, conducting livestreamed interviews of all candidates, and holding a public vote to select the replacement.

For appointed seats, the bill sets a clear expectation that vacancies be filled promptly. It requires a replacement to be appointed within 60 days, which helps avoid prolonged vacancies that can disrupt decision making on budgets, staffing, school construction, and student services.

House Bill 140 does not dictate who must be selected. It sets standards for transparency and timeliness so that the public can have confidence in how school

board leadership is maintained. It also ensures consistency across counties while respecting the different structures that local boards use to appoint members.

Ultimately, this bill is about trust. When leadership transitions happen behind closed doors or without clear timelines, it erodes public confidence in school governance. House Bill 140 strengthens public engagement and ensures that when vacancies occur, the process for filling them is fair, visible, and accountable.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the committee to issue a favorable report on House Bill 140.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jamila J. Woods". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being the most prominent.

**Delegate Jamila J. Woods**  
Maryland House of Delegates  
District 26 – Prince George’s County