

EZRA MACLEOD TOWNE

Testimony Unfavorable to HB1334: Education - Engagement Policies and School Compact (Maryland Public Education Parental Partnership Act)

March 9, 2026

Delegate Jheanelle K. Wilkins, Chair, Delegate Jessica Feldmark, Vice-Chair, and esteemed members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Ezra Towne, and my pronouns are they/them. I am a transmasculine nonbinary person with two children in Montgomery County Public Schools. **I'm writing to you today to ask you to vote unfavorably on HB1334 - the Maryland Public Education Parental Partnership Act.**

Under the guise of parent/teacher collaboration, this bill will disproportionately effect marginalized communities. I believe that it opens the door for wide ranging annual curriculum review by school parents.

HB1334 has far-reaching implications for Maryland's LGBTQ and BIPOC residents with children in its schools. It could give parents and gurdians more ability to control the content of Family Life and Human Sexuality curriculum. I am proud of the non-traditional family I have created, and it would crush me and my children to not see families like theirs reflected there. As a nonbinary person, I would be devastated if my children's classmates weren't able to learn at least a little bit about gender identity so that they could understand me better - or at least not be surprised to encounter a non-dad or non-mom parent.

HB1334 could also give parents the ability to determine whose history falls into schools' official curriculum. Information about civil rights struggles for women, people of color, Asian Americans, Indigenous, and/or LGBTQ+ people could disappear from that curriculum. The devastation of Indigenous lands and cultures caused by European colonization of the Americas could also be suppressed. But these are just a few examples.

While HB1334 intends to make engagement in the production of this compact include diverse portions of local communities it leaves out LGBTQ+ students, and students of color. In addition, the parents most likely to have the time to contribute to this are predominantly white, middle and upper class, two-parent households. Single parents or guardians, parents or guardians of childeren of color, immigrant families, families with disabled children, and poor families will not have the time to engage in creating a compact. This means that their areas of concern will likely NOT be considered to the same degree.

I trust educators to make our diverse curriculums, not school parents and guardians. Parents and guardians who wish to expand upon the curriculum of the schools, or provide different perspectives on that curriculum are free to do so at home with their children.

For these reasons, I **ask for an unfavorable report on HB1334**, the Maryland Public Education Parental Partnership Act.

Sincerely,
Ezra MacLeod Towne
Wheaton, Maryland
District 18