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**TESTIMONY ON HB#1438- POSITION: FAVORABLE**

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**State Board of Education - Public High School Graduation Requirements**

**TO:** Chair Wilkins, Vice Chair Feldmark, and members of the Ways and Means Committee

**FROM:** Richard Keith Kaplowitz

**My name is Richard Keith Kaplowitz. I am a resident of District 3, Frederick County. I am submitting this testimony in support of HB#1438, State Board of Education - Public High School Graduation Requirements**

The College and Careers Pathway organization has studied *Changing Graduation Requirements for a Changing World*<sup>1</sup>

What do high school graduates need to know and be able to do to be prepared for college and career? This is the fundamental question that state policy makers confront when determining minimum high school graduation requirements or assessing whether these requirements need to change to meet the needs of a rapidly evolving economy. States typically set minimum course requirements to earn a high school diploma and some also specify assessments that students must complete to graduate. In some states, policymakers have created multiple diploma options or pathways to graduation to increase flexibility for students.

Trends in changing graduation requirements - Increased emphasis on non-core-academic graduation requirements. States have long included a health education course as part of their graduation requirements, but many states are now adding additional non-core-academic requirements geared towards preparing healthy, financially literate, well-rounded, and engaged citizens:

- **civics education**
- **community service**
- **financial literacy course**
- **CPR/first aid training**
- **ethnic studies**

Promotion of science, technology, and math (STEM)

- **Creating STEM diplomas or a STEM diploma seal**
- **Computer science or technology course requirement** Increased emphasis on career preparation

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<sup>1</sup> <https://collegecareerpathways.org/changing-graduation-requirements-for-a-changing-world/>

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Career and technical education (CTE) coursework or career-related activities

- **CTE coursework**
- **transition, career, or postsecondary plans**

Addition of competency-based options or requirements

- A **capstone project**
- An **apprenticeship** to fulfill career and technical education requirements
- A standards-based **portfolio**
- A **project-based learning experience**

This bill recognizes that what we should ensure our students learn is constantly changing as the world changes. In recognition of the pace of technology and cultural factors this bill will require the State Board of Education to review graduation requirements for public high school students every 5 years; and require implementation of updated graduation requirements for the cohort entering high school in the school year following State Board approval.

**I respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable report on HB#1438.**