

**HB 973:** Open Meetings Act - Enhanced Requirements for Educational Entities and Retention Requirements: Please vote to **SUPPORT** this bill.

Dear Government, Labor & Elections Committee:

I am writing to strongly urge you to **SUPPORT HB 973**.

HB 973 would apply enhanced Open Meetings Act requirements to critical educational bodies—the Maryland State Department of Education, the Accountability and Implementation Board, and county boards of education and promotes greater accountability and openness in education governance decisions that affect students, families, and taxpayers.

Education decisions—from curriculum standards and funding allocations to accountability measures and policy changes—profoundly impact Maryland families, students, and communities. Too often, important deliberations occur with limited public visibility or access to materials, eroding trust in our public education system. These commonsense enhancements promote openness, allow parents and taxpayers to better monitor and engage with the process, and hold educational leaders more accountable without imposing undue burdens.

**Greater transparency in education governance strengthens democracy, fosters informed participation, and helps ensure decisions serve students' best interests.** Maryland families deserve to see how their schools and state education agencies operate in the open.

For these reasons, I respectfully ask you to **vote in favor of HB 973**.

Thank you for your time and thoughtful consideration of my concerns regarding this important education legislation.

Respectfully,

Trudy Tibbals