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THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Testimony for Senate Bill 98
Baltimore County School Board Nominating Commission – Membership – Alterations
Before the Ways and Means Committee
April 1, 2026

Good afternoon, Chair Wilkins and members of the committee.

Senate Bill 98 (“SB 98”) is a new bill expanding our School Board Nominating Commission and staggering the terms of the Commission’s members.

The Baltimore County School Board Nominating Commission is responsible for requesting applications, reviewing candidates, and ultimately nominating candidates for the Board of Education.¹ Eight members of the Commission, one from each legislative district, are appointed by the Governor, and one at-large member is appointed by the County Executive. But because the Board of Education touches every facet of the education system, there are currently 10 members appointed by organizations like the Teachers’ Association of Baltimore County, Towson University, and the Baltimore County Branch of the NAACP, to name a few.

Although the Baltimore County Chamber of Commerce was one of those organizations appointing a member of the Commission, it unfortunately closed operations in August of last year.² To maintain a connection with the business community, SB 98 replaces that organization with the Greater Baltimore Chamber of Commerce as an appointing organization. The original bill misnamed this organization, but both houses adopted amendments to correct this error.

Senate Bill 98 also proposes adding two new members to the Nominating Commission, one appointed by the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees Local 3 Council 434 and one by the Citizens’ Advisory Council for Gifted and Talented Education.

¹ Baltimore County School Board Nominating Commission Bylaws.

² <https://www.wbal.com/baltimore-county-chamber-of-commerce-closes-due-to-financial-challenges>

AFSCME Local 434 represents Baltimore County Public Schools employees in roles like food service, transportation, and building operations. Their perspectives based on day-to-day operations are crucial to evaluating Board of Education candidates who understand exactly what it takes to deliver high-quality education to over 100,000 students³ every single day.

The Citizens' Advisory Council for Gifted and Talented Education is a community group supporting the County's gifted and talented educational efforts. They share resources, provide forums for discussion, and advocate for programs that enable students to develop to their full potential.⁴ Their presence on the Nominating Commission would represent the interests of gifted and talented learners across the County.

SB 98 would also stagger the terms of the members of the Nominating Commission. Currently, all members serve concurrent four-year terms. Under SB 98, half of the members' terms would terminate in 2028, and the other half in 2030. Preventing complete turnover, this staggering preserves the institutional knowledge of the Commission and maintains stability.

SB 98 passed through both houses with overwhelming majorities, and I thank this committee for their leadership in reaching that result.

³ Baltimore County *Students Count* Report, Table of Enrollment 9/30/2023.

⁴ Baltimore County Citizens Advisory Council for Gifted and Talented Education Bylaws.