



House Bill 633

Education – Accountability and Implementation Board - Membership

MACo Position: **SUPPORT**

To: Ways and Means Committee

Date: March 3, 2022

From: Brianna January

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **SUPPORTS** HB 633. This bill would expand the required membership on the Blueprint Accountability and Implementation Board (AIB) to more fairly represent the geographical diversity of the state and the school systems the Board is tasked to support.

Counties share the same concerns about the lack of geographical representation on the AIB as expressed by Governor Hogan and legislative leaders last year when the Board's membership was being considered. Local school systems and their unique needs vary greatly throughout Maryland. Cultural, community, and regional differences shape the needs and challenges of each local jurisdiction, especially when it comes to educational policy and the major reforms required by the Blueprint.

Counties look forward to partnering with the AIB to help shape and implement those changes set out by the Blueprint. Unfortunately, the AIB as currently composed, does not reflect the diversity of the state's local school systems. Currently, the Board lacks representation from whole swaths of the state, namely, Western Maryland, the Eastern Shore, and Southern Maryland. It also does not properly reflect some of the most populous counties of the state, including Prince George's and Anne Arundel Counties. Reasonably, this is of great concern for counties as they embark on the daunting task of educational reform and Blueprint implementation.

HB 633 seeks to remedy this by expanding membership on the AIB and requiring that at least one board member be from the regions of Western Maryland, the Eastern Shore, and Southern Maryland, and one from each of the most populous jurisdictions: Baltimore City and Baltimore County, and Anne Arundel, Montgomery, and Prince George's Counties.

Under such changes, the AIB will not only be more geographically representative of all local jurisdictions it seeks to support, but it will also better address any challenges and complex situations that may arise in the forthcoming work to implement the many reforms required by the Blueprint. Counties welcome the increased representation offered by HB 633 and look forward to working with a more representative AIB. For these reasons, MACo **SUPPORTS** HB 633 and urges a **FAVORABLE** report.