



THE PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY GOVERNMENT

Chairman
Derrick Leon Davis
Council Member, District 6

March 23, 2016

The Hon. Jim Rosapepe, Chair
Prince George's County Senate Delegation
James Senate Office Building, Room 314
Annapolis, Maryland 21401-1991

The Hon. Jay Walker, Chair
Prince George's County House Delegation
Lowe House Office Building, Room 207E
Annapolis, Maryland 21401-1991

Re: Prince George's County Council Bill Positions

Dear Senator Rosapepe & Delegate Walker:

It is my pleasure, on behalf of the Prince George's County Council, to transmit our position on pending proposed State legislation for the 2016 General Assembly Session. The Council met on March 22, 2016. The enclosed report reflects our position on General Assembly bills as they are currently drafted.

The Council appreciates the opportunity to work together with you and your colleagues to address issues important to our citizens and the operation of Prince George's County. Should you have any questions or need additional information please do not hesitate to contact me. For your convenience my office phone number is (301) 952-3426. Thanks again, for favorable consideration of the Council's position.

Sincerely,

Derrick L. Davis
Chair

Attachments

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cc: Hon. Bobby A. Zirkin, Chair, Judicial Proceedings
Hon. Joan Carter Conway, Chair, Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs
Hon. Thomas M. Middleton, Chair, Finance
Hon. Edward J. Kasemeyer, Chair, Budget and Taxation
Hon. Kumar P. Barve, Chair, Environment and Transportation
Hon. Sheila E. Hixson, Chair, Ways and Means
Hon. Joseph F. Vallario, Jr., Chair, Judiciary
Hon. Dereck E. Davis, Chair, Economic Matters
Hon. Rushern L. Baker, III, County Executive
Mr. Kenneth Battle, Director, Intergovernmental Affairs

RULES & GENERAL ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE REPORT

The Prince George's County Council met on March 22, 2016 with the following Members present:

Council Member, Derrick L. Davis, Chair
Council Member, Dannielle M. Glaros, Vice Chair
Council Member Mary A. Lehman
Council Member Obie Patterson
Council Member Deni Taveras
Council Member Karen R. Toles
Council Member Todd M. Turner

The Council voted for the following positions on these respective bills:

- | | Statewide |
|--|---|
| 1. HB 1 (Barve) | Motor Vehicles – Special Registration Plates – Confederate Battle Flag - SUPPORT |
| 2. HB 141/SB407 (Luedtke)/(Manno) | Education – Education Accountability Program – Limits on Testing – SUPPORT w/AMENDMENT |
| 3. HB 74/ SB 117 (Speaker)/(President) | Judgeships – Circuit Courts and District Court - SUPPORT |
| 4. HB 72 (Luedtke) | Education – Sexual Abuse and Assault Awareness and Prevention Program – Development and Implementation – SUPPORT |
| 5. HB 245/SB 310 (Dumais)/(Raskin) | Child Abuse and Neglect – Failure to Report – SUPPORT |
| 6. HB 234 (Grammer) | State Highways – Electronic Map of State Roads by State Legislative District – SUPPORT |
| 7. HB 1398 (Jameson) | Homeowner's Insurance – Discrimination Based on Driving History of Applicant or Insured – SUPPORT |
| 8. HB 378/SB 322 (Tarlau)/(Pinsky) | Homeowners' Property Tax Credit Program - Eligibility Awareness Campaign – SUPPORT |
| 9. HB 1410/SB 493 (M. Washington)/(Pinsky) | Teacher Induction, Retention, and Advancement Act of 2016 – SUPPORT as AMENDED |



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County Council

POSITION STATEMENT

HB 1 Motor Vehicles – Special Registration Plates –
Delegate Confederate Battle Flag
Kumar Barve

POSITION: SUPPORT

HB 1 prohibits the Motor Vehicle Administration (MVA) from authorizing the display of an emblem or logo that depicts the Confederate Battle Flag on motor vehicle registration plates. The bill also prohibits MVA from transferring or renewing a special registration plate that depicts the Confederate Battle Flag.

In 1997, the United States District Court for the District Court of Maryland ruled that vehicle registration plates were protected under the First Amendment of the United States Constitution as free speech. In June 2015, the United States Supreme Court overturned that ruling in *Walker v. Texas Div., Sons of Confederate Veterans, Inc.* finding that specialty license plates are a form of government speech, thus allowing the states to reject designs which represent messages they do not support. Subsequently, by November 2015 the State of Maryland discontinued specialty plates that displayed the Confederate Battle Flag. If this bill is successful, Maryland will join a growing list of states that have banned the issuance of registration plates depicting the oppressive symbol.

The Hogan Administration is currently recalling the remaining plates and giving a \$10 credit to the owner which may be applied to a replacement plate. Very recently, the MVA advised that there are approximately 30 outstanding Confederate Battle Flag specialty plates in the state. This bill will prohibit the transfer of any vehicle registration plates displaying an emblem or logo depicting the Confederate Battle Flag, and will further prohibit the registration renewal of a motor vehicle displaying any of the same until the plates are returned to the Administration.

The Southern Poverty Law Center records that more than 500 extremist groups display the Confederate Battle Flag as one of their symbols; and, unfortunately, there are scores of images forever etched in our minds of this flag being used as a rally call to provoke acts of terrorism within our country, resulting in devastating massacres with a multitude of victims and immeasurable suffering. Moreover, recent acts of domestic terrorism, motivated by race, has heightened consciousness in our nation about the persistence of racially divisive symbols like the Confederate Battle Flag, and state sponsorship of such symbols.



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Page 2 **HB 1** Motor Vehicles – Special Registration Plates – Confederate Battle Flag

While there are some who tout southern pride as a reason to prominently display this flag, many Americans consider the Confederate Battle Flag to be an oppressive symbol often associated with racism and slavery, and it continues to serve as a painful reminder of a heritage of hatefulness and divisiveness. When counting the states that were part of the Confederacy, Maryland is not one of them, offering further reason why this state should ban the use of the Confederate Battle Flag on our motor vehicle plates.

The Council believes that the rightful place for displaying historical artifacts are in museums, and that hateful reminders of a painful past do not belong in government buildings or on official government documents, including state-issued motor vehicle registration plates. The Prince George's County Council believes that this legislation is the right approach, and that banning the Confederate Battle Flag on state license plates is most appropriate.

Therefore, the County Council recommends a position of **SUPPORT** on **HB 1** and respectfully requests your favorable consideration of its position.

Prepared by: Eric L. Johnston III
 Strategic Solutions Center, LLC
 Jennifer A. Jenkins
 On behalf of Prince George's County Council



THE PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY GOVERNMENT

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POSITION STATEMENT

HB 141/SB 407 Education - Assessments - Limits on Testing
Delegate Eric Luedtke/
Senator Roger Manno

POSITION: SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENT

HB 141/SB 407 requires the Maryland State Board of Education to adopt regulations that limit the amount of time that may be devoted to federal, state, and locally mandated tests for each grade to 2% of the minimum required annual instructional hours.

There has been significant discussion regarding the over-testing of our children. Many teachers and parents have voiced concern about the damage of over-testing to include the loss of valuable instruction time, increased stress and anxiety, demotivation to engage in school, and a narrowing curriculum away from art & science. In 2015, the Maryland General Assembly passed legislation that created the Commission to Review Maryland's Use of Assessments and Testing in Public Schools. This commission found that many school systems are analyzing their local assessment programs and considering a reduction. Additionally, the Obama administration recently released a "Testing Action Plan" that recommends reducing testing time to 2% and advises that assessments be worth taking, high quality, time-limited, fully transparent, and tied to improve learning.

The Prince George's County Council is also aware of the bill's unintended educational mandate to local school systems. As currently drafted, this bill would push the lion's share of assessment reductions onto the local school boards to meet the 2% cap. This is due to the inflexibility of federal and state mandated assessments. While the Council understands the need for the reduction of standardized testing, we have concerns regarding the State of Maryland mandating local testing requirements.

With this, the Council suggests an amendment to this legislation that will afford local jurisdictions to annually petition the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) if they are unable to reduce testing under the 2% cap. Ideally, the local school board would contact MSDE to justify why they may not meet compliance and formally request additional hours beyond the 2% cap. We believe this will allow local school boards to continue work toward assessment reduction, while giving the State local assessment oversight.

Therefore, the County Council recommends a position of **SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENT** on **HB 141/ SB 407** and respectfully requests your favorable consideration of its position.

Prepared by: Eric L. Johnston III
Government Relations Manager
Strategic Solutions Center, LLC
On behalf of Prince George's County Council

County Administration Building – Upper Marlboro, Maryland 20772



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POSITION STATEMENT

HB 1410/SB 493
Delegate Mary
Washington/ Senator
Paul Pinsky

Teacher Induction, Retention, and Advancement Act
of 2016

POSITION:

SUPPORT AS AMENDED

HB 1410/SB 493 establishes a Teacher Induction, Retention, and Advancement Program for first-year teachers who participate in the program to be afforded at least 20% more time than other teachers to be spent on mentoring, peer observation, assistance with planning, or other preparation activities. The bill also increases the maximum State matching stipend for teachers who hold National Board Certification (NBC) from \$2,000 to \$5,000. As amended, the Senate version, SB 493 makes the program optional for County Boards of Education to participate.

The Code of Maryland Regulations (13A.07.01.04, 13A.07.01.05, & 13A.07.01.06) requires each local school system to establish and maintain a comprehensive induction program for all new teachers and establish a mentoring program as part of its comprehensive induction program. These regulations provide a great framework, but HB 1410/ SB 493 goes further by requiring specific time allocations for the first-year teacher induction, retention, and advancement program. These specifications along with the adopted amendment (SB 493) that allows each local board of education to choose to participate in the program are favorable to the County Council.

Teachers are the lifeblood of the Prince George's County Public School System. Their career development is a critical part of creating an education workforce that is engaged with the students, supported by the administration, and committed to Prince George's County. All efforts to retain, mentor, and advance teachers within the school system are significant priorities for the County. As Prince George's County continues to strengthen its school system, legislation like HB 1410/ SB 493 provides even more opportunity to create a world-class system by investing in a very important asset; teachers.

Therefore, the County Council recommends a position of **SUPPORT AS AMENDED** on **HB 1410/ SB 493** and respectfully requests your favorable consideration of its position.

Prepared by: Eric L. Johnston III
Government Relations Manager
Strategic Solutions Center, LLC
On behalf of Prince George's County Council

SB0493/814736/1

BY: Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee

AMENDMENTS TO SENATE BILL 493
(First Reading File Bill)

AMENDMENT NO. 1

On page 1, in the sponsor line, strike “and Madaleno” and substitute “Madaleno, and Middleton”; in line 7, after “Program;” insert “authorizing each county board of education to choose to participate in the Program; requiring a county board to select certain teachers to participate in the Program;”; in line 12, after “requiring” insert “a”; in the same line, strike “boards of education” and substitute “board”; and in line 13, strike “be provided to”.

AMENDMENT NO. 2

On page 4, in line 14, after “(B)” insert “(1)”; after line 15, insert:

(2) (I) EACH COUNTY BOARD MAY CHOOSE TO PARTICIPATE IN THE PROGRAM.

(II) A COUNTY BOARD SHALL SELECT THE FIRST YEAR TEACHERS TO PARTICIPATE IN THE PROGRAM.;

in line 27, strike “EACH” and substitute “A”; strike beginning with “THAT” in line 27 down through the first “TEACHER” in line 28; and in line 28, after “TEACHER” insert “PARTICIPATING IN THE PROGRAM FROM THAT COUNTY”.

On page 5, in line 9, strike “LOCAL SCHOOL SYSTEMS” and substitute “COUNTY BOARDS”.