



THE PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY GOVERNMENT

Chairman

Derrick Leon Davis

Council Member, District 6

MAR 8 2017

The Hon. Edward J. Kasemeyer, Chair
Senate Budget and Taxation
3 West Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401-1991

The Hon. Anne R. Kaiser, Chair
House Ways and Means
Lowe House Office Building, Room 131
Annapolis, Maryland 21401-1991

Re: **Bill Position** - HB 1080 (Walker) – Education – Universal Prekindergarten –
Established – **SUPPORT**

Dear Senator Kasemeyer & Delegate Kaiser:

It is my pleasure, on behalf of the Prince George's County Council, to transmit our position on HB 1080 (Walker) – Education – Universal Prekindergarten – Established, which is before you this 2017 General Assembly Session. The Council met on March 7, 2017. The enclosed statement reflects our position as the bill is currently drafted.

The Council appreciates the opportunity to work together with you and your colleagues to address issues important to Maryland 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

Enclosure

cc:

Honorable Jay Walker, District 26

Hon. Rushern L. Baker, III, County Executive

County Administration Building – Upper Marlboro, Maryland 20772

Phone (301) 952-3426 Fax (301) 952-3238

E-mail: CouncilDistrict6@co.pg.md.us

www.princegeorgescountymd.gov



THE PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY GOVERNMENT

(301) 952-3700
County Council

POSITION STATEMENT

(HB 1080)

Delegate

Jay Walker

Education – Universal Prekindergarten – Established

POSITION:

SUPPORT

HB 1080 Education – Universal Prekindergarten – Established expands public prekindergarten to all four-year-old children in Maryland regardless of family income, thus ensuring that these children are able to receive at least a half-day of publicly funded prekindergarten education. The bill provides each local school system with a supplemental prekindergarten grant based on the number of full-time equivalent (FTE) eligible children (those who are four years old on September 1) enrolled in prekindergarten in the county on September 30 of the prior school year. The grant to each county is one-half of the State share of the per pupil foundation amount for each eligible FTE child.

Maryland has taken steps toward universal prekindergarten since at least the early 2000s. The Bridge to Excellence in Public Schools Act of 2002 required each local school system to make publicly funded prekindergarten available to economically disadvantaged four-year-old children in the State. To qualify as “economically disadvantaged,” a child must be from a family whose income is at or below 185% of federal poverty guidelines. Chapter 2 of 2014 expanded prekindergarten services to additional eligible four-year-old children from families whose income is at or below 300% of federal poverty guidelines by establishing a competitive grant program to provide funding to qualified public and private prekindergarten providers. A report on prekindergarten expansion commissioned by the Maryland General Assembly recommended that the State offer universal, full-day prekindergarten for all four-year-olds in Maryland, by providing funding for 80% of Maryland’s four-year-olds to attend either a public prekindergarten program or a private program that has received a rating of Level 5 in Maryland EXCELS (the State’s tiered Quality Rating Improvement System for licensed child care centers, family child care providers, and public prekindergarten programs) or has national or state accreditation.ⁱ

Page 2

Prince George's County Council

HB 1080 Education – Universal Prekindergarten – Established – SUPPORT

Research shows that young children's earliest learning experiences can have powerful long-term effects on their cognitive and emotional development, school achievement, and later life outcomes.ⁱⁱ We believe this research to be true. By developing and funding a Universal Prekindergarten program, we send a message that in Maryland our maxim is "Start Ahead, Stay Ahead." And so, we look to the State to help support all Maryland children in the earliest years of life by investing in high-quality prekindergarten programs.

For these reasons, the Prince George's County Council offers its **SUPPORT** of HB 1080, in an effort of narrowing the achievement gap, increasing the graduation rate and improving student success across our State. We respectfully request your favorable consideration of our position.

Prepared by: Tony Perez
 LA Perez Consulting
 Jennifer A. Jenkins
 On behalf of Prince George's County Council

ⁱ <http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/Documents/adequacystudy/AppendicesAE112916.pdf>

ⁱⁱ <http://standleadershipcenter.org/sites/standleadershipcenter.org/files/media/WWSF-PreKindergarten.pdf>