



**Board of Education of Howard County
Testimony Submitted to the Maryland House of Delegates
Economic Matters Committee
February 25, 2020**

**Board of Education
of Howard County**

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HB1521: SUPPORT

**Howard County - Sales of Residential Real Property - Notice of School District
Boundary Changes Ho. Co. 04-20**

The Board of Education of Howard County (the Board) supports **SB0909 Howard County - Sales of Residential Real Property - Notice of School District Boundary Changes Ho. Co. 04-20** to require home sale contracts in Howard County to include a notification that school districts are subject to change.

Statutory authority of local boards of education to establish and maintain school attendance areas is outlined in Section 4-109(c) of the Education Article, stating, "With the advice of the county superintendent, the county board shall determine the geographical attendance area for each school established under this section." Yet, throughout the recently completed boundary adjustment process, the Board heard innumerable public testimony expressing the notion that *our family specifically bought our home with the expectation that our children would attend this school.*

This misconception, however, is not isolated to the most recent redistricting. The Howard County Public School System's Office of School Planning routinely receives calls of this nature from residents, some hoping to determine with certainty what school their children can expect to attend in five, ten, or more years when considering a home purchase. With the increased development in Howard County specifically, the school system receives many complaints over advertisements that perpetuate the notion that when you buy a home your child is guaranteed to attend the school where students in that community currently attend.

In November 2019, the Howard County Council passed Resolution 134-2019 stating "the County Council finds that the practice of including school district areas when advertising homes is misleading and calls upon real estate agents, builders and developers, property managers, private homeowners, lending institutions, and others advertising homes for sale or rent in Howard County to eliminate immediately all references to schools, and school districts on directional and promotional signs." While the Board took no position on the local resolution or HB0826 considered by the Howard County Delegation this session to address such advertisements, these legislative efforts are illustrative of the impact a misconception of this nature can have.

By ensuring residents are notified of the potential for future boundary adjustments when purchasing a home in writing, HB1521 has the potential to prevent community misunderstandings that they will be un-impacted when redistricting occurs. We thank the Howard County Delegation for moving this important piece of legislation forward, and urge a favorable report of HB1521 from this Committee.