

CRAIG J. ZUCKER
Legislative District 14
Montgomery County

Budget and Taxation Committee

Subcommittees

Vice Chair, Capital Budget

Chair, Education, Business and
Administration

Chair, Senate Democratic Caucus



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THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Testimony of Senator Craig J. Zucker
Senate Bill 720- Education - Maryland School for the Blind - Pay Plan
Senate Budget and Taxation Committee
February 24th, 2021
12:00pm
Position: SUPPORT

Good afternoon Chairman Guzzone, Vice Chairman Rosapepe, and distinguished members of the committee. It is my pleasure to testify today in **support** of **Senate Bill 720 - Education - Maryland School for the Blind - Pay Plan**.

The purpose of Senate Bill 720 is to address discrepancies in State funding for the Maryland School for the Blind compared to their peers. The underfunding of salaries has not kept pace with the changing student population and increased costs at the Maryland School for the Blind. The Maryland School for the Blind has been particularly negatively impacted by its inability to pay professional personnel at appropriate levels, and the fact that every year they have had to cut additional professional personnel from their staff in order to balance the Maryland School for the Blind budget.

Senate Bill 720, requires the Secretary of Budget and Management to establish a pay plan that includes pay plan classifications and pay grades based on duties, responsibilities, education, and training required. The Board of Directors of the Maryland School for the Blind would review the salaries of public school teachers and other professional personnel in Baltimore County. The Board of Directors would recommend to the Secretary of Budget and Management salaries that would be adequate to recruit and retain qualified teachers and professional personnel.

The Board of Directors would provide recommendations to the Secretary of Budget and Management on or before June 1 or July 1 of the first fiscal year in which the pay plan would take effect. Beginning with the third fiscal year the pay plan is in effect and in every third fiscal year thereafter, the Secretary of Budget and Management would adjust the pay plan, if necessary, to ensure that salaries in the pay plan are adequate to recruiting and retaining qualified teachers along with other professional personnel.

This legislation would allow the Board of Directors to review the salaries of public school teachers and other professional personnel in Baltimore County and recommend adjustments to the pay plan to the Secretary of Budget and Management. The Secretary of Budget and Management would review the recommendations by the Board of Directors and incorporate

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adjustments into the budget recommendations for the Governor's review in the annual budget request.

For these reasons, I urge a favorable report on Senate Bill 720. Thank you for your kind consideration.