



Peter Franchot
Comptroller

TESTIMONY OF COMPTROLLER PETER FRANCHOT

Support - Senate Bill 831 - Education Support Professionals - Workgroup and Bonus

Budget and Taxation Committee

March 9, 2022

Chair Guzzone, Vice Chair Rosapepe and members of the Committee, it is my pleasure to provide testimony in **support** of **Senate Bill 831 - Education Support Professionals - Workgroup and Bonus**. I would like to thank Senators Zucker and King for sponsoring this important legislation, and the Committee for providing the opportunity for my testimony to be heard.

We owe a debt to everyone who helps teachers teach and children learn – no exceptions. For too long, instructional assistants, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, front office workers and other Education Support Professionals have seen slow or no growth in their wages, despite increasing demands on their time and talents. Everyone involved in helping Maryland’s children learn struggled over the past two years, as the COVID-19 pandemic raged on, and those workers met those challenges without any anticipation of reward. Senate Bill 831 not only creates a workgroup to study how wages should be calculated for these important positions, but also provides a one-time bonus of either \$500 in FY2023 or \$1,000 in FY2024. We should recognize the commitments and sacrifices of these workers and reward their dedication to our children.

Senate Bill 831 ensures Education Support Professionals receive an upfront bonus for their hard work in challenging times and assures their contributions to Maryland’s economy – and our children’s well-being – will be compensated appropriately in the future. For the reasons stated above, I respectfully request a **favorable report** for Senate Bill 831. Thank you for your time and consideration.

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