

CRAIG J. ZUCKER
Legislative District 14
Montgomery County



James Senate Office Building
11 Bladen Street, Room 122
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
410-841-3625 · 301-858-3625
800-492-7122 Ext. 3625
Fax 410-841-3618 · 301-858-3618
Craig.Zucker@senate.state.md.us

Budget and Taxation Committee
Chair, Capital Budget Subcommittee

Chair, Senate Democratic Caucus

THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Testimony of Senator Craig J. Zucker
Senate Bill 311 - Nonpublic Education - Special Education Placements - Renaming
and Teacher Salaries (Teacher Pay Parity Act)
Senate Budget and Taxation Committee
February 8, 2023
1:00pm
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 311 - Nonpublic Education - Special Education Placements - Renaming and Teacher Salaries (Teacher Pay Parity Act)**.

Senate Bill 311 renames the “nonpublic educational program” to be the “special education placement program” and aligns teacher salaries for those working in special education schools to be competitive to those of their public school counterparts. MSDE published a salary parity study in December of 2021 which found the average teacher salary in public schools and special education schools differed between 23.3% to 40.7%.

These special education schools and programs are an extension of public schools and fulfill an essential function in meeting particular education needs. However, with the Blueprint for Maryland’s Future providing public school teacher salaries to grow, the pay gap between them and special education teachers will become even wider. By beginning to align the pay disparity, special education programs will be able to competitively compensate their staff, provide students with the resources they need, and help to retain their skilled staff.

For these reasons, I urge a favorable report on Senate Bill 311. Thank you for your kind consideration.