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MAYOR

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HB 153

February 1, 2023

TO: Members of the Ways and Means Committee

FROM: Nina Themelis, Interim Director, Office of Government Relations

RE: HB 153 - Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners - Student Members and Task Force to Study Compensation

POSITION: SUPPORT

Chair Atterbeary, Vice Chair Alonzo, and Members of the Committee, please be advised that the Baltimore City Administration (BCA) **supports** House Bill (HB) 153 as it seeks to establish more robust student participation on the Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners.

HB 153 aims to transform student participation in the Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners by increasing the number of student members, expanding their voting authority, and altering the process by which students are nominated and voted on by their peers for membership. Additionally, the bill establishes a task force to explore compensation for school members.

The BCA believes student members bring a unique perspective to the Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners. We are supportive of expanding the number of student representatives on the board and expanding their voting authority. It is important to ensure that students are appropriately represented and that their voices are heard. It is equally important that the student representation be equitable, diverse, and that the nomination and voting process includes broad participation from students in schools across the City.

We remain concerned about compensation for school board members but understand that the Task Force is designed to simply explore feasibility. We appreciate the seats provided to the Mayor's Office to ensure all stakeholders are represented.

For these reasons, the BCA respectfully requests a **favorable** report on HB 153.