

01/29/2025

Richard Keith Kaplowitz
Frederick, MD 21703

TESTIMONY ON SB#/0008- POSITION: FAVORABLE

Education - Maryland Civic Excellence Program – Established

TO: Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and members of the Education, Energy and the Environment Committee

FROM: Richard Keith Kaplowitz

My name is Richard Keith Kaplowitz. I am a resident of District 3, Frederick County. I am submitting this testimony in support of SB#/0008, **Education - Maryland Civic Excellence Program – Established**

If Maryland schools are to prepare students for the future as engaged citizens school's systems should promote and reward the students who have acquired and applied knowledge of civics. Students must be encouraged to learn that freedom also means responsibility and guided to recognize and make those citizen responsibilities a part of their future.

This bill promotes that goal by establishing the Maryland Civic Excellence Program as a **voluntary** program in which local school systems **may** participate to recognize students and public schools that promote the civic readiness and civic engagement of students in public schools in the State. A specific reward program should be created to acknowledge the accomplishment through establishing minimum criteria for the award of a Seal of Civic Excellence and designation as a Center of Civic Excellence. Data should be collected to evaluate the effectiveness of this program in reaching designated goals through requiring participating local school systems to submit an annual report to the Department of Education.

If the youth is the future then everything we can do to help them make that future with the knowledge and tools they need can secure that future for them and our counties, state, and nation.

I respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable report on SB#/0008.