

My name is Christopher Keane, and I am a proud participant in the Inaugural Maryland Corps/Service Year Option Program and an active volunteer in civic organizations across our state. I am writing to express my strong support for SB0008, which seeks to establish the Maryland Civic Excellence Program.

Service and civics are fundamental pillars of our society. They must be ingrained in our children to foster a sense of community and civic responsibility. This bill, which has no associated costs, aims to promote civic education and service in Maryland, making our state a leader in civic innovation.

The Maryland Civic Excellence Program will ensure that our high schools promote service and civic involvement. By educating students on America's history, Maryland's history, and the workings of government at all levels, we empower them to be active and informed citizens. This understanding is crucial for the success of our democracy and the well-being of our communities.

I believe that this legislation will lead to a more successful Maryland. When more people understand how the system works, their voices can be heard, and legislators can focus on addressing the needs of their constituents. This starts with our education system, setting a high standard for civic education.

This bill does not dictate specific courses but encourages educators to develop policies that ensure students are well-versed in civics. It promotes involvement and understanding, enabling individuals to reach out to their legislators, commissioners, or representatives when their communities face challenges.

As a young person who has experienced the power of civic engagement, I am dedicated to promoting civic excellence in Maryland. Educating our youth on how to implement change and understand their government is essential for our democracy. It is not about political affiliations; it is about ensuring that every Marylander has a voice and feels included in the system.

SB0008 is the starting point for building a more civically engaged society. I urge you to support this bill and help make Maryland a state of civic innovation and excellence.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely, Christopher Keane