

**FAVORABLE**  
**Senate Bill 8**  
**Education - Maryland Civic Excellence Program - Established**

**Senate Committee on Education, Energy, and the Environment**  
**January 29, 2025**

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**Government Relations**

The Maryland State Education Association supports Senate Bill 8, which would establish 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. It would also require that each participating school system report to the Department annually on the program.

MSEA represents 75,000 educators and school employees who work in Maryland's public schools, teaching and preparing our almost 900,000 students so they can pursue their dreams. MSEA also represents 39 local affiliates in every county across the state of Maryland, and our parent affiliate is the 3-million-member National Education Association (NEA).

MSEA supports legislation that enhances citizen participation in the political and voting process. The program described in this bill would encourage students to register to vote, participate in civic-minded extracurricular and volunteer activities, and strive for academic achievement in social studies, government, and civics coursework. We also urge greater equity of access to such educational experiences and support efforts to ensure a diverse and holistic social studies and civics education for all students.

**We urge the committee to issue a favorable report on Senate Bill 8.**