

# BOARD OF EDUCATION OF ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY

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**BILL:** SB729 COUNTY BOARDS OF EDUCATION - LENGTH OF SCHOOL YEAR - ADJUSTMENTS

**HEARING DATE:** FEBRUARY 28, 2018

**COMMITTEE:** EDUCATION, HEALTH, AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

**POSITION:** SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENTS

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The Board of Education of Anne Arundel County supports with amendments **SB729 COUNTY BOARDS OF EDUCATION - LENGTH OF SCHOOL YEAR - ADJUSTMENTS**. This bill would authorize a local board of education to extend the school year for up to five days without approval from the State Board of Education.

Governor Hogan's 2016 Executive Order requiring schools to open post Labor Day and end no later than June 15 each school year has resulted in a calendar crunch for Maryland school systems. As such, Anne Arundel County Public Schools appreciates and supports the intent of SB729 as it seeks to provide schools systems flexibility at the end of the school year, if needed, due to inclement weather.

The Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR) requires school systems to demonstrate that they have modified their calendars both within the school year and by extending the school year a minimum of three days past the last scheduled day of school. In addition, a 2017 advice letter from the Attorney General stated that make-up days due to inclement weather need to occur prior to the June 15 date, as specified in the Governor's Executive Order. As such, it is unclear whether HB553, as written, would allow the additional days it would authorize after June 15. We, therefore, request this clarification in the bill as it is needed to provide school systems the actual flexibility they need to schedule all required instructional days and make-up days within the parameters of the Governor's Executive Order. In addition to adding days at the end of the school year, it may be necessary to clarify that make-up days as a result of inclement weather and not regular days of instruction, may be scheduled after the June 15 date.

Accordingly, the Board of Education of Anne Arundel County respectfully requests a **FAVORABLE** committee report with the requested amendments on SB729.