



**HB206 PUBLIC AND NONPUBLIC SCHOOLS - CLASSWORK AND ASSESSMENT INVOLVING LIVE
AND DEAD ANIMALS - STUDENT CHOICE POLICY**

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WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

OPPOSE

Jeanette Ortiz, Esq., Legislative & Policy Counsel (410.703.5352)

The Board of Education of Anne Arundel County opposes **HB206 Public and Nonpublic Schools - Classwork and Assessment Involving Live and Dead Animals - Student Choice Policy**. This bill allows a student in a public or nonpublic school to choose not to participate in or observe, in whole or in part, classwork or an assessment that includes specified actions (including dissection) conducted on a live or dead animal or the severed part of a dead animal.

HB206 is an unnecessary intrusion on local school systems' curriculum, policy and administrative decisions. Local school systems can effectively accommodate students who refuse to participate in or observe the dissection of dead animals. For example, AACPS already has accommodations in place for students and these accommodations have been in place for at least 16 years. AACPS employs alternative methods for students to accomplish relatively the same outcome when dead creatures were the focus of the lab activity. Those alternatives include the use of models, simulations, video/webinar interactions, and reading assignments. Further, a 2016 survey by the Maryland State Department of Education, found that all but one county board of education have policies or procedures in place that allow students to refuse to participate in assignments that involve live or dead animals. As such, the proposed legislation is unnecessary and issues with the one jurisdiction that does not currently have a policy and procedures to allow students to refuse to participate in such classes can be addressed at the local level.

Accordingly, the Board of Education of Anne Arundel County respectfully requests an **UNFAVORABLE** committee report on HB206.