



HB53 COUNTY BOARDS OF EDUCATION - LENGTH OF SCHOOL YEAR - ADJUSTMENTS

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WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

SUPPORT

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The Board of Education of Anne Arundel County supports **HB53 County Boards of Education - Length of School Year - Adjustments**. This emergency bill clarifies that the authority of a local board of education to extend the length of the school year for up to five days beyond June 15 is not restricted to circumstances in which normal school attendance is prevented because of natural disaster, civil disaster, or severe weather conditions. This local board authority is not subject to any conditions and is not subject to approval by the State Board of Education or any other entity.

In 2016, Governor Hogan issued an Executive Order requiring all public schools to begin the school year no earlier than the Tuesday immediately following Labor Day and end no later than June 15. The parameters set forth in the Executive Order have required most, if not all, school systems in the State to rewrite their school calendars in order to squeeze the mandated 180 days of instructional days between Labor Day and June 15. In the 2017-2018 school year, AACPS cut 10 days from our calendar as compared to the 2016-2017 school year. Spring Break was shortened from six days to three days, the number of inclement weather days were reduced from five to three, and parent-teacher conference opportunities were cut from three to two. The 2018-2019 school calendar resulted in additional reductions due to the fact that there was a General Election Day, Yom Kippur fell on a weekday, and June 15 was a Saturday. HB53 would provide AACPS the greatly needed flexibility with the school calendar as it would extend the date by which schools would have to close each year by an additional five days as originally intended by legislation passed by the General Assembly in 2018. This legislation continues to meet the desires of the Governor and many Marylanders for a longer summer, but does not put school systems into an unmanageable calendar crunch.

Accordingly, the Board of Education of Anne Arundel County respectfully requests a **FAVORABLE** committee report on HB53.