

THE ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

2644 Riva Road · Annapolis · Maryland · 21401

BILL: SB90 PUBLIC AND NONPUBLIC SCHOOLS – CLASSWORK AND ASSESSMENT INVOLVING LIVE AND DEAD ANIMALS – STUDENT RIGHT OF REFUSAL

HEARING DATE: JANUARY 25, 2017

COMMITTEE: EDUCATION, HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

POSITION: OPPOSE

CONTACT PERSON: JEANETTE ORTIZ, ESQ., *LEGISLATIVE & POLICY COUNSEL* (410.703.5352)

The Anne Arundel County Board of Education **OPPOSES Senate Bill 90 Public and Nonpublic School - Classwork and Assessment Involving Live and Dead Animals – Student Right of Refusal**. **Senate Bill 90** provides that a student may refuse to participate in or observe, in whole or in part, classwork or an assessment that includes the following actions conducted on a live or dead animal or the severed part of a dead animal: dissection, vivisection, incubation, infliction of harm, capture, or destruction. The bill also requires the Maryland State Department of Education and County Boards to take certain steps when implementing the provisions of the bill.

Senate Bill 90 is an unnecessary intrusion on local school systems' curriculum, policy, and administrative decisions. This bill is unnecessary as local schools can effectively accommodate students who refuse to participate in or observe the dissection of dead animals. Anne Arundel County Public Schools (AACPS) already has these accommodations in place for students, and they 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, but are not limited to, the use of models, simulations, video/webinar interactions, and reading assignments.

Accordingly, the Anne Arundel County Board of Education respectfully urges the Committee to issue an **UNFAVORABLE** committee report on **Senate Bill 90**.