

# ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

2644 Riva Road · Annapolis · Maryland · 21401

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**BILL:** SB155 SCHOOL VEHICLES - SEAT BELTS - REQUIREMENTS

**HEARING DATE:** JANUARY 25, 2017

**COMMITTEE:** JUDICIAL PROCEEDINGS COMMITTEE

**POSITION:** OPPOSE

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

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The Anne Arundel County Board of Education **OPPOSES Senate Bill 155 Vehicles – Seat Belts - Requirements**. This bill would require school vehicles registered in the State and purchased on or after July 1, 2018, regardless of the date the school vehicle was manufactured or assembled, to be equipped with specified seat belts for every seat on the school vehicle.

Local boards of education are responsible for funding transportation provided to students within their school systems. Local school systems' responsibilities for transporting students have significantly expanded due to additional costs associated with the transporting of special education and homeless students. Operational expenses associated with fuel costs and labor shortages have also contributed to this increased cost. Although the State provides some funding for transportation, those dollars do not increase enough from year to year to cover increasing enrollments and increasing costs of obtaining and maintaining school buses.

**Senate Bill 155** proposes a new unfunded safety mandate. We believe that efforts should instead focus on securing adequate funding to enable local school systems to ensure maximum student safety according to industry standards.

Accordingly, the Anne Arundel County Board of Education respectfully urges the Committee to issue an **UNFAVORABLE** committee report on **Senate Bill 155**.