



THE MARYLAND GENERAL ASSEMBLY
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

December 13, 2022

Statement on Amendments to Howard County 10-23 from Senator Lam and Delegate Watson

The introduction of Ho.Co. 10-23 has generated significant community interest. The development of legislation is an iterative process, and so we thank the many individuals and groups that have contacted us to provide constructive feedback. While we have requested amendments to the bill that are currently in drafting, we are advising the public of these changes at this time so that any testimony at the upcoming Delegation hearing can be directed to the updated version of this bill. The amendments would do the following:

- Retain the existing Board of Education structure with five elected members and two members elected at-large.
- Add two appointed members for a total of nine Board of Education members. A Nominating Commission will be established comprised of diverse representatives of various stakeholder organizations. The Commission will compile a list of potential appointees after completing a robust public process including the acceptance of applications, a review of qualifications, and convening of public meetings. The County Executive will select an appointee taking into consideration demographic qualities and geographic residence of the current Board members. The County Council must confirm the appointee to the Board, and the appointed member will serve a four-year term. This mirrors the process of Baltimore County (which has a hybrid elected and appointed Board), allows for greater diversity or specific expertise among Board members, and would reduce barriers to serve for many qualified individuals who are unwilling or unable to campaign for election.
- Establish a compensation commission to review and recommend salary adjustments for Board of Education members every four years similar to existing processes for County Councilmembers and for state legislators.
- Introduce a state-wide bill and a local Delegation bill to allow the Citizens Election Fund to be extended to candidates for Board of Education. Current state law does not permit public financing for Board of Education races. Similar legislation has failed to pass the House of Delegates in prior years.
- All currently elected Board members will be able to serve their full term of office.

The Delegation webpage will be updated to include the amendment language once it has cleared the drafting process.