

Transportation Funding

(Adopted 1981, 1984, 1987; amended 1990, 1992; readopted 1995, 1997; amended 2000, 2002, 2005; readopted 2008, 2011)

WHEREAS, adequate state funding for public school transportation has been a long-time goal of the Maryland Association of Boards of Education (MABE); and

WHEREAS, the Bridge to Excellence in Public Schools Act of 2002 increased state funding for student transportation to address chronic underfunding through the 1980's and 1990's; and

WHEREAS, between fiscal 1981 and 1998 total expenditures for student transportation increased by 180 percent, yet during this same period state expenditures for student transportation increased by only 35 percent; and

WHEREAS, the percentage of total student transportation costs funded by the state peaked at about 90 percent in 1984 and declined gradually in each subsequent year to a funding level of 36 percent in 1998; and

WHEREAS, for nearly twenty years, state funding for disabled student transportation was limited to \$500 times the number of disabled students requiring special transportation services who were transported by the county board in excess of the number transported during the 1980-1981 school year; and

WHEREAS, the Bridge to Excellence in Public Schools Act of 2002 increased the base transportation grant for 15 counties that experienced aggregate enrollment increases between 1980 and 1995, a time when the transportation formula did not include annual adjustments for enrollment increases, and increases by fiscal 2008 per pupil funding for students receiving special transportation services from \$500 to \$1000; and

WHEREAS, additional requirements for student transportation have been created through mandated programs; and

WHEREAS, rapid increases in gasoline prices present significant unanticipated expenditures from transportation budgets and potentially reduce available funding for other educational programs and services; and

WHEREAS, the federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, as amended by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, requires that homeless students must be provided with transportation to and from their school of origin at parent or guardian request; transportation services may include crossing district boundaries or providing special education busing; and if the student transportation needs cross district boundaries, the two districts must determine how to divide the responsibility and cost;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that MABE will cooperate with other interested groups to advocate for adequate student transportation funding; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that MABE will urge the Governor and the Legislature to fully fund the student transportation funding increases provided by the Bridge to Excellence in Public Schools Act.