

**BILL:** Senate Bill 855  
**TITLE:** Public Schools - Collection of Biometric Information from Students - Prohibited  
**DATE:** March 13, 2013  
**POSITION:** OPPOSE  
**COMMITTEE:** Education, Health and Environmental Affairs Committee  
**CONTACT:** John R. Woolums, Esq.

The Maryland Association of Boards of Education (MABE), representing all twenty-four local boards of education, opposes Senate Bill 855.

MABE opposes Senate Bill 855 because it would unreasonably limit local board of education and school administration discretion to utilize technology which relies on biometric information for purposes of granting user access to programs and services. In this way, Senate Bill 855 is inconsistent with the flexibility in establishing local school system policies and procedures that MABE believes is essential to the current and continued success of our statewide system of public education.

MABE firmly believes that Maryland's nationally recognized success in providing a high quality public education throughout the State is the direct result of the policies and priorities adopted by each of the twenty-four local boards of education. Maryland's local boards recognize and affirm that a basic premise of our nation's system of public education is that public schools should be governed locally. Most importantly, Maryland's twenty-four local boards of education have a proven record of striving to continuously improve their abilities to govern in a manner that best meets the needs of the students.

Maryland's local boards of education commend the General Assembly for consistently delegating the governance and administration of public education to local boards of education. Local boards must continue to play a vital role in governing the local school system, advocating for public education, and engaging local communities and promoting participation by parents and other community members in the education process. Local board governance is needed so that everyone feels a responsibility for, and ownership of, Maryland's public schools and our students' futures.

By retaining local decision-making authority, including the procurement and utilization of technology that may collect and rely on biometric information, local boards can best balance educational and service delivery practices, available resources to implement those practices, public input, and academic and financial accountability.

For these reasons, MABE opposes Senate Bill 855 and requests an unfavorable report.