

**BILL:** House Bill 400  
**TITLE:** Education - Public School Holidays – Presidents’ Day and Easter Monday  
**POSITION:** SUPPORT  
**DATE:** February 14, 2017  
**COMMITTEE:** Ways and Means Committee  
**CONTACT:** John R. Woolums, Esq.

The Maryland Association of Boards of Education (MABE), representing all of the State's local boards of education, supports House Bill 400 to provide flexibility for local school systems in setting school calendars.

Local boards serve a broad constituency of professional educators, parents, students, businesses and other community groups. MABE supports preserving and protecting the rights of local communities and their respective boards of education to adopt school calendars which must reflect not only state testing schedules and currently mandated holidays, but also other important local considerations. Therefore, MABE supports preserving and expanding the flexibility available to local boards of education to adopt school calendars.

On August 31, 2016 and October 11, 2016 Governor Hogan signed Executive Orders mandating a post-Labor Day start date and end date on no later than June 15 for all of Maryland’s public schools beginning in 2017. The second Executive Order established more limited waiver criteria for the State Board of Education. For local school systems, the strict limitation of beginning school after Labor Day and ending school by June 15th has required significant changes to school calendars, and will continue to do so in future school years. In this context, the flexibility provided by this bill is much needed.

Again, MABE supports this legislation in order to reasonably expand local school system flexibility regarding Presidents’ Day and the Monday following Easter. Importantly, the bill in no way constrains a local school system’s prerogative to maintain these traditional school holidays.

For these reasons, MABE requests a favorable report on House Bill 400.