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BILL: House Bill 1171
TITLE: Public School Employees – Required Training on Retirement Benefits
DATE: March 7, 2017
POSITION: OPPOSE
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, opposes House Bill 1171.

MABE appreciates the intent of this legislation to help ensure that public school employees are informed about their own retirement benefits. However, MABE believes there are more cost effective and efficient means of doing so than through the mandatory training approach taken in this legislation. As the fiscal note indicates, there are approximately 96,400 members of TRS/TPS employed by local school boards. Mandating in person training for all of these employees as prescribed in this legislation would be extraordinarily costly and time consuming and MABE is convinced that other methods of education and outreach should be explored in the alternative.

Local boards recognize that in addition to the operating and capital funding we receive from local, state and federal sources, the State's administered and funded Teachers' Retirement System is an integral part of our highly successful public education system. Boards of education place a very high value on the women and men who work to educate the more than 870,000 students enrolled in prekindergarten through twelfth grade. Therefore, we individually and collectively promote Maryland schools as great places to work, with competitive salaries and benefits, including the State retirement benefits.

Again, local boards greatly appreciate the role that the State's investment in the Teachers' Retirement System plays in our teacher recruitment and retention efforts as we strive to educate all students to high standards, and to do so in a fiscally sound manner with the local, state and federal resources we receive.

For these reasons, MABE urges an unfavorable report on House Bill 1171.