

BILL: Senate Bill 334
TITLE: County Boards of Education - Appointment to Fill a Vacancy of an Elected Member - Candidate Information Requests
DATE: February 13, 2019
POSITION: OPPOSE
COMMITTEE: Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee
CONTACT: John R. Woolums, Esq.

The Maryland Association of Boards of Education (MABE) opposes Senate Bill 334, which would Require all local boards of education to provide a list of the names of the candidates for a vacancy of an elected board member upon request to the individual making the request or by publication on the county board website.

MABE's primary concern regarding this bill is that the laws governing each local board of education, including provisions regarding the composition, terms, compensation, student members, and the filling of vacancies are unique to each local board. The Education Article contains different sections for each of the 24 local boards, including a wide variety of approaches to the filling of vacancies for elected board member positions.

For example, among the following five local boards of education, vacancies in elected board member positions are in five different ways, Specifically, such vacancies are filled by the Governor (Allegany County), the School Board Appointment Commission (Anne Arundel County), the Governor based on the recommendation of the School Board Nominating Commission (Baltimore County), the County Commissioners (Calvert County), and the remaining members of the board of education (Caroline County).

Traditionally, amendments to a section of law pertaining to a local school system are typically the subject of local bills, developed through the collaboration among members of the local delegation and, ideally, the local board of education. MABE is concerned that the provisions of this statewide legislation would not apply, or not apply consistently, to the many different processes in law governing the filling of vacancies on local boards of education.

For these reasons, MABE requests an unfavorable report on Senate Bill 334.