

**BILL:** Senate Bill 416  
**TITLE:** Education - Curriculum - Holocaust and Genocide Unit  
(Lessons of the Holocaust and Genocide Act)  
**DATE:** February 14, 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 416. MABE joins the Superintendents Association in emphasizing that we certainly appreciate the intent of Senate Bill 416 and the critical importance of our students studying the Holocaust, the period of history from 1933-1945 during which approximately six million Jews became victims of Nazi Germany and its collaborators throughout Europe. It was a time in history that must never be forgotten. Therefore, the horrific acts that took place during the German occupation in Europe, and in Russia and other nations, are covered in the social studies curriculum currently being taught in middle and high schools throughout our state.

As this committee knows, MABE opposes efforts by the General Assembly to legislate curriculum, firmly believing that this role belongs to local boards of education in conjunction with the State Board. Therefore, MABE's opposition to this bill does not rest on an evaluation of the merits of teaching any specified subject matter, but rather the opposition to statutorily mandating the teaching of any one concept or content item.

In creating the State Board and local boards of education, the General Assembly has delegated to them the responsibility for developing curriculum and administering assessments. The State Board establishes State standards and statewide graduation requirements; the local boards implement locally-developed curriculum to ensure that standards are met and students are prepared to meet graduation requirements. State and local assessment programs ensure that all students, schools, and school systems are held accountable for their work.

Therefore, in the context of the recognizing the essential role of the state legislature in enacting laws which establish the framework for key elements of the State's approach to public education, MABE continues to support local decision-making authority in developing curriculum.

For these reasons, MABE requests an unfavorable report on Senate Bill 416.