Chairman Kaiser and Members of the Committee, I am Julie Hummer and I have the privilege of serving as President of the Board of Education of Anne Arundel County.

I am here on behalf of our Board of Education, which formally voted on February 7 to endorse House Bill 679 sponsored by Del. Pena-Melnyk.

This legislation keeps in place the Governor’s desire to open schools after Labor Day but provides critical flexibility for schools systems like ours by shifting the mandated last day of class to the third Friday in June as opposed to June 15.

HB679 is common-sense legislation that continues to meet the desires of the Governor and many Marylanders for a longer summer but doesn’t put school systems into an unmanageable calendar crunch.

To construct a calendar for this school year, we were forced to cut Easter/Spring break from six days to three and trim the number of inclement weather days we build into our calendar from five to three. As we sit here today, we have used two of those three snow days, and we are lucky. Many school systems have had to make similar choices and are already out of snow days.

To meet an even bigger crunch next year due to the fact that Yom Kippur falls on a weekday, we have an Election Day, and the 15\textsuperscript{th} of June is on a Saturday, we have reduced the number of parent-teacher conferences from 3 days to 2, cut the number of built-in inclement weather days from 3 to 2, and opted to open schools on the day of the Maryland State Teachers Association convention.

None of those are choices we wanted to make, but ones we were compelled to make in order to fit our school calendar within the prescribed window.

Finally, let me say that in this school year, our school system has just one professional development days for staff on which we close schools for students – the the state teacher convention day. The remainder of our professional development is done either through pulling teachers from classes or through early dismissal days for students.

HB679 would go a long way toward providing the flexibility we need in our calendar but would still, as was said when the Governor signed the executive order, let summer be summer.

I urge a favorable committee report on this legislation.