The Anne Arundel County Board of Education OPPOSES House Bill 834 Education - Maryland High School Diploma - Civics Test Requirement. This bill would require a student to achieve a passing score on a civics test that consists of the 100 questions used for the civics portion of the naturalization test given the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services; requiring, on or before the first day of the 2018-2019 school year, the State Board to determine the means of providing each high school student an opportunity to take the required civics test; requiring a student to answer correctly at least 60% of the civics test questions to receive a passing score.

The Anne Arundel County Board of Education supports local decision-making authority in developing curriculum. The program of studies in each school system is developed as a whole and aligned with the State and local standards and assessments. Accordingly, the authority to establish curriculum and assessments is the domain of the State Board of Education and the local boards of education. We are the same entities charged with the responsibility to research, investigate, and evaluate both curriculum and assessments. Legislation such as House Bill 834, which seeks to interject piecemeal segments into the curriculum or to extract portions of the testing, only serve to weaken the effectiveness of the entire educational program.

Accordingly, the Anne Arundel County Board of Education respectfully requests an UNFAVORABLE committee report on House Bill 834.