The Anne Arundel County Board of Education SUPPORTS House Bill 115 WITH AMENDMENTS. This Bill creates a robotics grant program to provide grants to public schools to support and expand existing robotics programs. It requires the Governor to include at least $500,000 annually in the state budget to support the program.

Robotics clubs provide students with opportunities to enrich their studies and advance their skills related to the exciting and marketable field of robotics. We support additional funds to maintain and expand robotics clubs. The Bill, as written, would stabilize and support the clubs that already exist but it would not allow us to expand and add additional robotics clubs. Accordingly, we recommend the Bill be amended to allow funding for new robotics clubs or programs, not just fund those already in existence. We would like to expand our robotics club offerings and additional funding would assist with that endeavor. Additionally, we would like to ensure that any available funds are not restricted by law or regulations. Robotics clubs should be able to pay for items including but not limited to equipment, supplies, competition fees, transportation, and club sponsor stipends. Likewise, robotics clubs should not be limited in nature to qualify for this funding. For example, underwater robotics, vex robotics, and Lego robotics should all be eligible for the funding provided by this Bill.

With the aforementioned considerations and additions, the Anne Arundel County Board of Education urges the House Ways and Means Committee to issue a FAVORABLE Report on House Bill 115.