



House Bill 1557

Public Schools – Health Services – County Boards of Education and Health Departments

MACo Position: **OPPOSE**

To: Ways and Means Committee

Date: March 4, 2020

From: Drew Jabin

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **OPPOSES** HB 1557. This costly and impractical bill would **confuse** ultimate responsibility for delivery of school health services and administrative oversight between county boards of education and local health departments.

HB 1557 would allow the Maryland Department of Health to shift the jurisdiction for provision of adequate school health care services from county boards of education to local health departments. Under these provisions, the local school board would provide the local health departments with its pro rata share of funding. MACo has concern as state funding is only a limited part of funding currently going to provide these services.

As stated in the Fiscal Note prepared by the Department of Fiscal Services, currently many county health departments are not responsible for providing any school health services. Federal pass-through and local funding dollars will not transfer to the local health departments to provide these services, leaving local health departments facing a difficult and costly burden both administratively and financially to provide student health services.

Further, the current Kirwan Blueprint legislation working its way through the General Assembly lacks a provision to fairly recognize funding outside the Board of Education that supports the county's education mission. HB 1557 would place counties at an added funding disadvantage, as the local funds spent to comply with this bill would not be credited as part of the "local share" for Kirwan mandated funding levels.

This bill would place a costly mandate on county governments to carry out new state policy, and specify a delivery system that may not be ideal for many counties. Accordingly, without funds and possible technical assistance to suitably implement the bill's requirements, MACo **OPPOSES HB 1557** and urges an **UNFAVORABLE** report.