



LARRY HOGAN
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MARYLAND
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

October 1, 2021

The Honorable Bill Ferguson
President of the Maryland Senate
H-107 State House
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear President Ferguson:

Thank you for acknowledging the bipartisan concerns raised regarding the lack of diversity on the Accountability and Implementation Board (AIB). I appreciate you recognizing the seriousness of this issue, and committing to take actions to ensure more equity and inclusiveness in this endeavor.

As you know, the AIB is charged with overseeing the implementation of billions in education spending and is granted plenary authority over education in Maryland. The scope of its responsibility is greater than even that of the State Board of Education. In order to succeed and achieve these equitable outcomes it's imperative that the AIB has membership with a deep understanding of the diverse student population in Maryland.

The law expressly requires that the Accountability and Implementation Board Nominating Committee select nominees that "reflect the geographic, ethnic, cultural and gender diversity of the State." Instead, nominees sent to me represent just four Central Maryland jurisdictions: Anne Arundel County, Baltimore County, Baltimore City, and Montgomery County.

This patent lack of diversity prompted strong opposition from state and local leaders in both parties. I have received letters from Prince George's County Executive Angela Alsobrooks expressing concerns over the lack of representation from Prince George's County—which has the largest Black population in Maryland—as well as the Maryland Legislative Latino Caucus expressing concerns that there is no Latino representation. In addition, leading legislators from Western Maryland, the Eastern Shore, and Southern Maryland have voiced strong objections to the total lack of representation from their regions, as have the Caroline County Board of Commissioners and the Senate and House Republican Caucuses.

Last month, I requested that the nominating committee immediately reopen the application process and provide a slate of nominees that accurately reflect the student population of Maryland to ensure the unique challenges throughout the state are represented. Instead of thoughtfully addressing these concerns, the committee's leaders sought a legal opinion to justify their inaction—attempting to use the letter of the law to blatantly violate the spirit of the law.

While I continue to have strong objections regarding the lack of diversity, in light of the commitments you have made to remedy those concerns, I am complying with my statutory requirement to appoint members to the AIB.

In making these appointments, I am hereby calling on the Senate Executive Nominations Committee to ensure during the confirmation process these nominees display a keen understanding of the unique issues to each jurisdiction and reject any nominee who does not demonstrate a sound familiarity with the different demographics in school systems throughout Maryland.

- Isiah “Ike” Leggett
- Mara R. Doss, Ed.D.
- Fagan Harris
- William E. “Brit” Kirwan, Ph.D.
- Joseph N. Manko
- Laura M. Stapleton, Ph.D.
- Jennifer M. Lynch, Ph.D.

Given the cloud of uncertainty that the nominating committee has created, the AIB must demonstrate to Marylanders that it is truly committed to equity and diversity in the best interests of our students.

Sincerely,



Larry Hogan
Governor

cc:

The Accountability and Implementation Nominating Committee
The Senate Executive Nominations Committee
House Speaker Adrienne Jones
Maryland Legislative Latino Caucus

Prince George's County Executive Angela Alsobrooks

Senator Michael Hough

Senator Mary Beth Carrozza

Senator Jack Bailey

Senator Paul Corderman

Delegate Kathy Szeliga

Delegate Wendell Beitzel

Delegate William Wivell

Washington County Delegation

Eastern Shore Delegation

Senate Republican Caucus

House Republican Caucus

Caroline County Commissioners