



MONTGOMERY COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

850 Hungerford Drive ♦ Room 123 ♦ Rockville, Maryland 20850



Bill: House Bill 39
Title: Orange Ribbon for Healthy School Hours – Establishment
Committee: Ways and Means
Date: January 28, 2016
Position: **OPPOSE**
Contact: Michael Durso, President, Montgomery County Board of Education

The Montgomery County Board of Education opposes House Bill 39.

This bill proposes The Orange Ribbon for Healthy School Hours certification that would recognize local school systems that create, implement, and enforce school start times that are consistent with the school start times recommended by the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene and the American Academy of Pediatrics.

This school year, at the Board of Education's direction, MCPS has shifted high school bell times later for the 2015–2016 school year. To accomplish this, second tier elementary schools currently end school at 3:50 p.m. which is the only practical way of starting high schools later. To accomplish the goals of HB0039, MCPS would have to increase buses to accommodate fewer tiers of bell times, which at this point is cost-prohibitive. A primary concern of establishing an Orange Ribbon for Healthy School Hours is that it will be a precursor to a mandatory regulation around bell times and school hours without the increased funding needed to support this. While the Board of Education is cognizant of the body of sleep science research, there is no funding associated with HB0039.

The change in school start times and the requirement of when students can board a school bus should be left to the authority of local Boards of Education given the complexity and cost of implementing changes.

For these reasons, we oppose this bill and ask for an unfavorable report.