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BILL: House Bill 999
TITLE: Commission on Innovation and Excellence in Education
DATE: March 3, 2016
POSITION: SUPPORT
COMMITTEE: Ways and Means
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House Bill 999 establishes the Commission on Innovation and Excellence in Education; provides for the composition, chair, and staffing of the Commission; requires specified appointments to be made to ensure diversity within the Commission; prohibits a member of the Commission from receiving specified compensation, but authorizes the reimbursement of specified expenses; requires the Commission to review the findings and recommendations of a specified study, review specified education finance formulas, and review specified accountability measures.

PSSAM enthusiastically supports House Bill 999. The intent of this bill is to convene a broad-based blue ribbon Commission, representing legislator leadership, education and business leaders, local government officials, and other major stakeholders. The Commission will be charged with developing legislation to ensure the long-term adequacy and equity of funding for Maryland public school students. The legislation is modeled on the Thornton Commission, which developed the Bridge to Excellence in Public Schools Act in 2002.

The Commission will review the findings of the Study on Adequacy of Funding for Education in the State Maryland. The Commission will evaluate the current education finance formulas and accountability measures and make recommendations for updating and enhancing the funding formulas established by the 2002 Bridge to Excellence Act. They will also provide innovative recommendation to meet the challenges of preparing students for success in the classroom, the workplace, and for life in a global economy.

PSSAM strongly **SUPPORTS** House Bill 999 and looks forward to participating in the work of the Commission on Innovation and Excellence in Education. We recommend a **favorable** committee report.