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BILL: House Bill 850
TITLE: Howard County - Board of Education Fund Transfers - Approval Process Ho. Co. 16-17
DATE: February 21, 2017
POSITION: OPPOSE
COMMITTEE: Ways and Means
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House Bill 850 alters the number of days by which the Howard County Council may act on a written request for budget transfers by the Howard County Board of Education; and authorizes the Howard County Council to approve or disapprove a written request for budget transfer in whole or in part.

PSSAM **opposes** House Bill 850.

Local superintendents and boards of education must maintain direct oversight and control over the day-to-day and long-term operation of local school system budgets. This bill would extend the number of days for the County Council to respond to categorical transfers in the school system's budget from 30 to 65 days. It also grants County Council the authority to approve in whole or in part, transfer requests from the Board of Education.

PSSAM believes House Bill 850 is not warranted or needed. Local superintendents working with local boards must be able to respond quickly to budgetary issues. This includes expeditious transfer of funds within the school budget. The current 30-day period for the County Council to take action is reasonable and fair and allows the local superintendent to balance the budget in a timely manner, especially if the transfer receives partial approval or is disapproved. To extend this period to 65 days would require the Board to submit requests earlier in the year, meaning less data on actual expenditures will be available to support requests. House Bill 850 will not provide sufficient time for local superintendents to efficiently and expeditiously manage local school system budgets.

Historically, the Howard County Board of Education has always submitted requests in a timely manner that has allowed the Council to actively approve requests within the 30-day deadline. The existing law provides adequate control and is consistent with other local school systems regarding this matter. House Bill 850 could seriously jeopardize the financial stability of the Howard County Board of Education by mandating changes that are neither necessary nor reasonable.

For the reasons stated above, PSSAM **OPPOSES** House Bill 850.