



**Testimony Concerning HB 778:  
“Education – Students With Disabilities Parental Consent  
for Individualized Education Program Content”  
Submitted to the House Ways & Means Committee  
March 10, 2016**

**Position: Support**

Maryland Family Network (MFN) supports HB 778, which would require parental consent before an Individualized Education Program (IEP) team could take five specific actions in a student’s IEP.

MFN has worked since 1945 to improve the availability and quality of child care and other supports for children and families in Maryland. As the largest and oldest statewide child advocacy organizations in Maryland, MFN is strongly committed to ensuring the health and well-being of all children across our state, including children with disabilities.

This bill would empower parents to be active partners in their child’s IEP process. They would have the right to consent if they agree with what the IEP team proposes, to refuse to consent if they disagree with what the IEP team proposes, or to do neither and let the IEP team implement the IEP after the expiration of the 20 business day period for a written response from the parents. Allowing parents to participate in their child’s IEP process in this way gives parents a stronger voice in the process and promotes a partnership between parents and the IEP team that could result in a more thoughtful IEP planning process

MFN urges your favorable consideration of HB 778.