

INVESTIGATIONS

Md. General Assembly Considers Taking Prince George's County School Board Credit Cards

By [Scott MacFarlane](#)

A Maryland state delegate authored legislation to strip government-issued credit cards from members of the Prince George's County School Board. The News4 I-Team's Scott MacFarlane reports. (Published Monday, Dec 29, 2014)

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Maryland state legislators will consider a bill to strip government-issued, taxpayer-funded credit cards from members of the Prince George's County School Board.

The bill, already formally drafted and submitted, would take effect July 1, 2016. The legislation's supporters referenced recent reports by the News-4 I-Team, which detailed controversial credit card expenses by board members, while lobbying on behalf of the bill.

- **[Md. School Board Scrutinized Over Credit Cards](#)**

The [proposed legislation](#), authored by Prince George's County State Delegate Alonzo Washington, would require school board members instead pay their future expenses upfront, then seek reimbursement through vouchers. The use of credit cards would be prohibited.

An October review of Prince George's County School Board credit card expenses by the I-Team revealed some members of the board purchased dozens of meals at local restaurants with their cards, totaling several thousand dollars over the course

of a year. Those meals included steak, seafood and desserts and were purchased at local restaurants within minutes of offices and members' homes.



Del. Barbara Frush (D-Beltsville) said school board members needn't carry credit cards to perform their jobs.

"I trust the school board," Frush said. "They're doing a good job. I think they're wonderful people. But why put temptation in their hands?"

- **Prince George's School Board Members' Expenses Scrutinized**

Frush said the legislation has been "pre-filed" with the General Assembly, indicating it could be among the first bills to receive a public hearing when the legislature reconvenes in mid-January.

Prince George's Public Schools spokespeople did not respond to requests for comment on the legislation. In a recent statement to the I-Team, the school board president said the board's credit card purchases did not violate state law, school policy or ethics standards. He said the board had also ordered a review of its credit card policies. Though he said the review would be complete by the end of November, it has yet to be publicly released.