

**Testimony in Support of House Bill 1
Built to Learn Act of 2020**

**House Appropriations Committee
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1:00 PM**

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Vice President**

The Maryland State Education Association supports House Bill 1, legislation that authorizes the Maryland Stadium Authority to issue up to \$2.2 billion in revenue bonds.

MSEA represents 75,000 educators and school employees who work in Maryland's public schools, teaching and preparing our 896,837 students for the careers and jobs of the future. MSEA also represents 39 local affiliates in every county across the state of Maryland, and our parent affiliate is the 3 million-member National Education Association (NEA).

There are tremendous unmet facility needs in every school district across the state—new construction, maintenance, and repairs. There are horror stories about the learning and working conditions for students and educators alike who go to school in buildings without heating and air or drinkable water and face rodent infestations, mold, and other deplorable conditions. Additionally, there are schools, especially in areas of increased enrollment, that are bursting at the seams and adding more students than classroom capacity year over year. Taking bold action like this to address the facility needs in our state is critical.

Current state and local resources are insufficient to meet the needs of all school systems. Despite the increased investment in school construction over the past decade, the average age of schools in the state actually increased by three years from 2006 to 2016. And each year, the Interagency Commission on School Construction receives far more funding requests than it can meet with current allocations. The shortage of funding is felt most acutely in jurisdictions with enrollment growth that exceeds the state average, because their construction programs must keep pace with rapid growth, and in low-wealth counties that cannot forward fund school construction projects.

MSEA supports the new investments needed to make meaningful progress in addressing the school construction and maintenance backlog in every district and urges a favorable report of the Built to Learn Act, House Bill 1.