



## HOWARD COUNTY OFFICE OF COUNTY EXECUTIVE

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Senator Guy Guzzone, Chair  
Budget and Taxation Committee  
Miller Senate Office Building, 3 West  
11 Bladen Street  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Re: **TESTIMONY OF SUPPORT: HB 1** – Built to Learn Act of 2020

Dear Chairman Guzzone,

Howard County Government and the Howard County Public School System have a longstanding history of prioritizing education and school construction funding to make us one of the nation's leading school systems. I support this proposal for a historic investment in school construction, not only for Howard County, but for jurisdictions across the state.

There is a significant need for adequate infrastructure to continue serving our students, educators, and families to ultimately, create the best teaching and learning environment in which we can grow our future. Howard County is grateful that our state aid will increase in challenging fiscal times, we know that every penny counts. Rest assured, these pennies make sense as an investment in our future. Just a few days ago, my fellow colleagues and I testified on the Blueprint for Maryland's Future because we understand the significant challenges our students and educators face in the classroom. We are grateful for the leadership of our Presiding Officers and all our state leaders, including those of you on this Committee, who are championing funding for both the Blueprint and school construction.

Despite our perceived affluence in Howard County, there is a significant need for increased capital investment in our schools. We are in dire need of extensive renovations of our older schools and the construction of new ones to keep pace with our student enrollment. We have more than \$500M in deferred maintenance, currently utilize nearly 200 relocatables and have the need for replacement of many HVAC systems we are currently paying more to repair than the cost of a full replacement.

Our school system has estimated more than \$145M in funding needs from the state over the next five years to keep our critical projects on schedule and relieve our schools, many of which have surpassed capacity. As the Built to Learn formula currently stands, it is estimated that Howard County would receive \$132M of the proposed \$2.2B to be dispersed among all jurisdictions in Maryland.

I recognize the importance of providing a local county match and am committed to doing so. I am encouraged to see that the cross-file, HB 1, passed in the House last week, 128-6. That level of collaboration emphasizes that this proposed investment transcends party lines and geographical boundaries.

I look forward to working with you and your colleagues in supporting critical investments in public education *and* infrastructure. I urge your support and favorable report on the Built to Learn Act of 2020.

Sincerely,

Calvin Ball  
County Executive