

Testimony SUPPORT of House Bill 165
Maryland Estate Tax – Unified Credit

House Ways and Means Committee
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The Maryland State Education Association supports HB 165, which restores the millionaire estate tax that will benefit the General Fund in ways that can be used to implement the new school funding formula our students and schools need.

MSEA represents 75,000 educators and school employees who work in Maryland's public schools, teaching and preparing our 896,837 students for 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).

MSEA supports passage of an adequate, sustainable, predictable revenue stream that will adequately fund both the operating and construction costs of our public schools. A great public school for every child means our students have updated technology, small manageable classes, safe and modern schools, proper healthcare and nutrition, and have highly qualified and highly effective educators. The Blueprint for Maryland's Future outlines improvements to access to Pre-K and Career Technology Education, as well as expansion of the educator workforce and increased salaries to help deliver individualized instruction and recruit and retain the best workforce in the country.

Implementing the Kirwan Commission's recommendations and making up for the learning loss and socio-emotional effects of the pandemic will take considerable resources. House Bill 165 is part of that funding solution.

This bill was introduced in the 2015 legislative session, and the fiscal note at the time estimated the bill would generate \$236.7 million from FY17 to FY20. During that time, it's estimated that every school in the state has been underfunded by \$2 million per year. Our kids can't wait any longer. The revenue generated in this bill is an important part of investing in Maryland's future.

MSEA urges a favorable report of House Bill 165.