

STEPHANIE SMITH
Legislative District 45
Baltimore City

Appropriations Committee

House Chair
Baltimore City Delegation



The Maryland House of Delegates
6 Bladen Street, Room 314
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
410-841-3486 · 301-858-3486
800-492-7122 Ext. 3486
Stephanie.Smith@house.state.md.us

THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

**HB0336: Maryland School for the Blind - Public School Construction
Program - Eligibility**

Bill Hearing: February 7th, 2023, 1:00pm, Appropriations Committee

Chairman Ben Barnes, Vice Chair Mark S. Chang, and Members of the Committee,

Today, I am pleased to be the sponsor of this legislation before this committee. Since 2012, the Maryland School for the Blind (MSB) has been eligible for funds from the Public-School Construction Program (PSCP). In 2028, the bill that has allowed for MSB's eligibility will expire. Many of the buildings on the MSB campus were built before the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). As a result, these buildings, as we now know, were unsuitable for students with complex needs. The MSB serves over 65% of the 2,000 Maryland students identified as blind or visually impaired every year. Most of the approximately 1300 blind and low vision students, many with multiple disabilities, throughout the state are impacted by MSB's services and the beautiful campus afforded by the State's investment through the PSCP. Because of inclusion in the PSCP, MSB has been transformed into a state-of-the-art, accessible campus. Students can now access all buildings and bathrooms on the campus. Offering this accessible campus will continue to help empower students with multiple disabilities as well as develop their skills and achieve the same level of knowledge as their peers.

House Bill 366 allows MSB to remain in the PSCP beyond 2028, enabling MSB to complete its master plan and providing the resources to maintain the State's significant investment in the MSB campus.

For these reasons I urge you to vote a favorable report on House Bill 366

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Stephanie M. Smith".

Stephanie Smith

