

HB1196 Blueprint for Maryland's Future Implementation - Funding and Independent Evaluation – Alterations

March 29, 2023

Senate Budget and Taxation Committee

SUPPORT

Chair Guzzone, Vice Chair Rosapepe and Members of the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee,

My name is Francoise Sullivan and I am a member of the Kent County Public Schools Board of Education. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB1196 - sponsored by Delegate Smith. This bill with alterations provides funding to cover the salary of each county's Blueprint Implementation Coordinator by altering certain education funding formulas and includes a request that the state mandate supplemental funding for small school districts with low student populations.

With a county population of less than 20,000, Kent County is Maryland's smallest county. We have five schools that serve the entire county: a single high school, a single middle school, and three elementary schools. Our school enrollment has been under 2,000 students for many years. All of our schools are Title I and two of our elementary schools are Community Schools.

Meaningful funding is difficult for us to raise locally because we are so small, so any additional funding from the state has potential for transformative impact in our schools. Conversely, without this additional funding, we struggle to pay (and retain) teachers, keep classroom sizes manageable, and offer adequate support to high-needs students.

If it passes, HB1196 will help small counties like ours secure the additional resources we need to ensure the strength and quality of Kent County Public Schools. I urge a favorable report on HB1196. Thank you for your time.

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