

## Sample Testimony on Class Size

Testimony from [Gerimi Belin - "Baltimore City parent" & Baltimore City Educator]  
**SB206 - Education - Collective Bargaining - Certificated Employees - Class Size**

Before the Senate Finance Committee  
February 9, 2023  
Position: FAVORABLE

Good morning/afternoon members of the Senate Finance Committee,

My name is Gerimi Belin and I'm a Baltimore City resident. I want to express my full support of SB206.

Maryland is one of only **nine states in the country** that does not allow teachers to have a say in class size and caseload. In other states where unions can negotiate class size, the result is not just smaller classes, but more support staff in large classes. Our schools need more staff to support our students academically and emotionally. Removing the ban on negotiating this is an important step in addressing varied student needs.

Research shows smaller classes lead to better outcomes for all kids – especially those who need help the most. Class size reduction has been shown to result in higher test scores, better grades, more engaged students, fewer disciplinary referrals, and less teacher turnover.

The quality of the classroom matters. We know the Blueprint funding will pay teachers more and give them more planning time but this is not enough.

This bill matters to me for 3 reasons. One, it allows for teachers to be able to do their jobs effectively by focusing on a realistic number of scholars in which the teacher can be effective. If scholars were to be taken on a field trip then a certain number of chaperones would be required so it's not too many students to "look after" at one time but the classroom does not demand the same grace. Another reason why this bill matters is we have to come to the realization that teachers are people and not robots. Meaning that we can not pull from an empty vessel and we can only be spread so thin before we become ineffective. Finally, teaching with 30 plus scholars in a room at times is not only challenging but the idea of scholars with accommodations does not always get the level of small group interactions and one-on-one settings as needed.

This bill matters to me not only as an educator but most importantly as a parent. I say this because as a parent of a child that has extra needs in the classroom settings, I often worry about the level of education that he receives. I know that the job is solely not on the teacher but parents as well and we try our best to work every night with him at home. But for so many of the scholars in this district, parents may not always have the resources nor the time to be able to provide their children with what they need.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Committee to issue a favorable report on SB206.  
Thank you.

Sincerely,

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