

Testimony from Liernelis Diaz-Casado, Baltimore City Public Schools Student, SOMOS
Organizer and a Writing Center tutor District Baltimore City Resident

SB206: Education - Collective Bargaining - Certificated Employees - Class Size

Official Testimony

Position: **FAVORABLE**

To the Senate Finance Committee

My name is Liernelis Diaz-Casado, and I'm a Baltimore City resident and a member of the SOMOS (Students Organizing a Multicultural and Open Society). I support [SB0206].

This bill will repeal the prohibition on a public school employer negotiating the maximum number of students assigned to a class.

Passing this bill is essential. As a student from Puerto Rico I'm used to having small class sizes, the average of students being 23. Decreasing class sizes facilitates both learning and teaching environments. Students and teachers are comfortable with each other, therefore they develop deeper relationships that encourage students to trust and participate in class. Increasing how much students understand topics in class will help to close the achievement gap and graduation rates to go up which would eventually get the attention of outsiders that might be considering coming to the state of Maryland looking for "an equal opportunity to succeed" as our governor Wes Moore says. Making people feel included in a classroom as immigrants or just people from other states would encourage student enrollment and will bring more teachers looking for the opportunity to be part of a world class public school system. It would also bring more families that would potentially be encouraged to invest money in our schools, houses and jobs. This would eventually lead to higher quality jobs which would bring in more tax dollars for the system to be able to invest in the individualized necessities of both students, teachers and all citizens.

I respectfully urge this committee to issue a favorable report on SB0206 Education - Collective Bargaining - Certificated Employees - Class Size.

Sincerely,

Liernelis Diaz-Casado
Organizer, SOMOS
Baltimore City College

liernelis.diazcasado@baltimorecitycollege.us
787-477-2390

Research:

- Brookings Institute 2011: “[Class Size: What Research Says and What it Means for State Policy](#)”
 - Average class size is 15.3 (based on data compiled [here](#) from National Center for Education Statistics)
 - Largest impact for class size reduction from STAR was “the positive effects of class size were largest for black students, economically disadvantaged students, and boys.”
 - “It appears that very large class-size reductions, on the order of magnitude of 7-10 fewer students per class, can have meaningful long-term effects on student achievement and perhaps on non-cognitive outcomes.”
- NCTQ 2019: “<https://www.nctq.org/blog/A-sizable-opportunity:-thinking-strategically-about-class-size>”
 - “Of our sample of 124 large districts (which includes the 100 largest districts in the country and the largest district in each state), we find that almost all (82 percent) put strict limits on class sizes in at least some grades.”
 - See table below for top nine districts from 2019 for average sizes by grade
 - Anne Arundel County Schools: goal for lower class size limits or goals for schools with more vulnerable student populations
- STAR, Tennessee 1980s
 - Compared classes of 15 to classes of 22, randomized groups (32% reduction)
 - Elementary students outperformed by .22 over four years, or equivalent of 3 months instruction
- SSRN, NY State: [Effect of class size on teacher attrition](#)
 - A decrease in class size from 23 to 20 students, under a district-wide policy, decreases the probability that a teacher leaves a school by 4.2 percentage points.
- 2009: NY Times: Class Size Around the World:
<https://archive.nytimes.com/economix.blogs.nytimes.com/2009/09/11/class-size-around-the-world/>

STEP BY STEP GUIDE TO SUBMITTING YOUR TESTIMONY:

Step 1: Finish Writing Your Testimony

SB00031/HB0153 - School Board Bill Toolkit:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1W4KGXFcigPgVYZwtdqLY_RAGCa7hEKL9MeJriGzqdY/e/dit?usp=sharing

HB0085/SB0206 - Class Size Bill Toolkit:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1aR9-ottSDoL18oEpObC4BhAvizrroiQLRLRqbEpLtCc/edit>

Step 2: Sign-In or Make MyMGA Account

<https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/mgawebsite/MyMGATracking/WitnessSignup>

Step 3: Go to "Witness Sign Up" & look for your bill

Decide if you want to submit written, virtual oral, live oral, or "both" which is written and virtual or live oral. Select that option and then hit SAVE.

Step 4: Wait for your testimony ZOOM link the morning of the hearing (if giving spoken testimony)
It will come from this email: no-reply@mlis.state.md.us

Step 5: Watch MGA youtube channel

Watch your hearing & jump on when your bill is called

<https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/mgawebsite/Information/YouTubeChannelInfo>

