

Testimony from:  
Maira B. Kaleida  
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Alliance to Reclaim Our Schools (AROS)  
**SB206 - Education - Collective Bargaining - Certificated Employees - Class Size**

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

Greetings, members of the Senate Finance Committee,

My name is Moira Kaleida and I am the Executive Director for the national coalition Alliance to Reclaim Our Schools. Today, I wish to express my full support of SB206, a bill that will drastically improve the teaching and learning environment in Maryland.

Our coalition, made up of union members and community organizations, deeply believes in creating schools where all children can learn and thrive. Numerous studies have shown not only the benefits of smaller class sizes for student outcomes, but also the detrimental effects that overcrowding can have on a school and its community.

Currently, we have a nationwide teacher shortage. Our members at AROS span all 50 states, including our strong members in Maryland, all vying to attract the best teachers. Manageable class sizes prevent teacher turnover and entice graduates to seek a contract in those districts. Maryland students deserve to have qualified, caring, and respected teachers.

While I have discussed the importance of manageable class sizes above, Maryland refuses to acknowledge these facts as it is one of only nine states in the country that doesn't allow teachers to have a say in class size and caseload. Our schools need teachers and support staff who are not overburdened and stretched too thin in order to support students academically, socially, and emotionally.

Removing the ban on negotiating this is an important step in addressing the needs of our diverse student population, and creating more equitable outcomes for all kids. I respectfully urge the Committee to issue a favorable report on SB206. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,  
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