

## **SB206 - Education - Collective Bargaining - Certificated Employees - Class Size**

Senate Finance Committee  
February 9, 2023  
Position: FAVORABLE

Greetings members of the Senate Finance Committee,

My name is Jess Ahart, and I am a Baltimore City resident in District 40. I am in full support of SB206.

Maryland is the one of only **NINE STATES in the country** that doesn't 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. Schools in my neighborhood especially do.

It should be obvious that smaller classes lead to better outcomes for all kids. The more caring and connected adults in a student's life, the more resources they will have access to navigate whatever challenges and decisions life throws at them. Class size reduction leads to 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.

I've lived in this neighborhood for over 20 years. I KNOW the kids who attend our local schools. Their teachers deserve the right to speak frankly about the needs their students face, and to be able to take steps to ensure that they get what they need to not merely survive, but to thrive.

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

Sincerely,

Jess Ahart  
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District 40 Resident