

**Testimony SUPPORT of House Bill 268
Maryland Estate Tax - Unified Credit**

**House Ways & Means Committee
February 9, 2023**

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The Maryland State Education Association supports House Bill 165, which restores the millionaire estate tax that will benefit the General Fund in ways that can be used to implement the new school funding formula our students and schools need.

MSEA represents 75,000 educators and school employees who work in Maryland's public schools, teaching and preparing our almost 900,000 students so they can pursue their dreams. MSEA also represents 39 local affiliates in every county across the state of Maryland, and our parent affiliate is the 3 million-member National Education Association (NEA).

MSEA supports passage of an adequate, sustainable, predictable revenue stream that will adequately fund both the operating and construction costs of our public schools. A great public school for every child means our students have updated technology, small manageable classes, safe and modern schools, proper healthcare and nutrition, and have highly qualified and highly effective educators. The Blueprint for Maryland's Future outlines improvements to access to Pre-K and Career Technology Education, as well as expansion of the educator workforce and increased salaries to help deliver individualized instruction and recruit and retain the best workforce in the country.

Implementing the Blueprint for Maryland's Future with fidelity and making up for the educational, and social-emotional and behavioral health impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic will take considerable resources. As recently described in the Department of Legislative Services' Fiscal Briefing to this committee, the state of Maryland is now better identifying students in poverty. This has led to 34.2% increase or 110,501 students from last year that have been identified as eligible for free or reduced priced meals. This will have a financial impact on the state, as Maryland understands that these students need more resources. This bill would generate needed revenue while creating a more fair taxation system in the state.

MSEA urges a Favorable Report on House Bill 268