



The Maryland School for the Blind
ACHIEVING INDEPENDENCE

Written Testimony

House Appropriations Committee

March 26, 2024

Subject: Testimony in Support of SB892 - School Construction - Public Charter School Facility Fund - Establishment

Honorable Ben Barnes, Chair

House Appropriations Committee - Room 121

House Office Building

Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Chair Barnes and Honorable Members of the Committee,

In connection with SB892, I am writing on behalf of The Maryland School for the Blind to express our support for the establishment of the Public Charter School Facility Fund. This fund will play a crucial role in providing necessary financial support to public charter schools across the state for eligible expenses associated with school facilities.

As an institution dedicated to the education and well-being of students, including those with special needs, we understand the importance of having adequate and safe facilities for learning. Access to quality facilities directly impacts the educational experience and outcomes of students. By establishing the Public Charter School Facility Fund, the state will ensure that public charter schools have the resources needed to acquire, plan, develop, finance, construct, lease, improve, repair, and maintain their facilities.

Furthermore, exempting the Fund from a requirement that interest earnings on State money accrue to the General Fund of the State demonstrates a commitment to prioritizing the needs of public charter schools and ensuring that funding is allocated where it is most needed. We commend the efforts of the Interagency Commission on School Construction in administering this Fund, as they possess the expertise and experience necessary to effectively manage such resources for the benefit of public charter schools statewide.

In conclusion, we support the establishment of the Public Charter School Facility Fund as it will contribute significantly to the enhancement of educational opportunities for students attending public charter schools in Maryland.

Sincerely,

W. Robert Hair

Superintendent

The Maryland School for the Blind