



*A Union of Professionals*  
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**Written Testimony submitted on  
January 23, 2020  
The Maryland House Appropriations Committee  
HB 1 – Built to Learn Act of 2020**

**SUPPORT**

Chair McIntosh and members of the House Appropriations Committee. On behalf of the 20,000 members of the American Federation of Teachers – Maryland (AFT-MD), we ask for a favorable report on HB 1 – The Built to Learn Act of 2020.

Schools in Baltimore City on average, are some of the oldest public school buildings in the state. Because of this, fears that the pipes that bring drinking water to our students contain unacceptable levels of lead, the school district has made the decision to import bottled water into our schools rather than risk poisoning our students.

Lead is known in the scientific community to be one of the most devastating neurotoxins known to man. The state's own department of health found that between 1993 and 2013, 65,000 children in the city tested positive for dangerously high levels of lead in the blood. Science has also pointed out that elevated levels of lead in someone's bloodstream is especially harmful to children as they grow and develop. For example, it has been shown that even small amounts of lead have been associated with learning disabilities, speech delays, lack of impulse control, aggressive tendencies, and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder.

New schools and infrastructure are desperately needed in Baltimore City for the health and safety of our children. The lead crisis is just one of the many problems our children face but it is the most urgent. Therefore, we ask a favorable report on HB 1.

Marietta English  
President