



MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MD
WOMEN'S DEMOCRATIC CLUB

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Informed, Better Connected, and
More Politically Effective

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WomensDemocraticClub.org

**Maryland Senate
Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee
Maryland House of Delegates
Appropriations Committee
Ways and Means Committee
Blueprint for Maryland's Future - Implementation (SB 1000/HB 1300)
February 17, 2020 - SUPPORT**

Thank you for this opportunity to submit written testimony concerning an important priority of the Women's Democratic Club of Montgomery County (WDC) for the 2020 legislative session. WDC is one of the largest and most active Democratic Clubs in our County with more than 600 politically active women and men, including many elected officials.

WDC supports passage of the Blueprint for Maryland's Future (SB1000/HB 1300) and its five major policy areas recommended by the Kirwan Commission, to be phased in over the next 10 years:

- Invest in early childhood education
- Transform teaching and school leadership into high quality and high status merit based professions
- Implement rigorous curricula, benchmarked to international standards and leading to college ready and industry certified workforce credentials
- Ensure all students are successful by providing significantly more support for schools that need it most, including students attending schools with high concentrations of poverty and struggling learners
- Establish a rigorous governance and accountability structure with meaningful consequences for under performance

WDC strongly supports full funding of the Blueprint for Maryland, phasing in 4.0 billion dollars more (state and local funds) over a 10 year period. We recognize that Montgomery County, which has exceeded Maintenance of Effort (MOE) since the Great Recession, will receive close to 1:1 matching funds in order to implement the Blueprint programs. We recommend the state open up avenues for local revenue streams, especially for future years, in order to assure full implementation.

Maryland cannot afford to continue with the status quo when educating its children. We are no longer a leader in the nation, in fact according to the latest NAEP scores, we are 27th in 4th and 8th grade math, 24th in 4th grade reading, and 17th in 8th grade reading. We can and must do better. According to the analysis by the Sage report, this investment will pay for itself. <https://www.baltimoresun.com/politics/bs-md-pol-kirwan-costs-20191203-hcf3va77xfdy3iiflierbdyfpj-story.html>

WDC especially supports expanding Pre-K, hiring more teachers, closing the opportunity gap at schools with a high concentration of poverty, and offering more Career and Technology Education. Montgomery County has shown commitment in all of these areas, but we need more resources in order to fulfill this commitment. As shown by the recent Montgomery County Office of Legislative Oversight report, we have work to do in closing the opportunity gap. <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/OLO/Resources/Files/2019%20Reports/OLORReport2019-14.pdf> The Blueprint for Maryland will provide the tools needed to ensure all children, no matter their zip code, can reach their potential.

WDC recommends a favorable report on SB1000/HB1300.

Respectfully,
Diana Conway

President, Women's Democratic Club

wdc@womensdemocraticclub.org

PO Box 34047

Bethesda, MD 20827

527 non-profit corporation