

**Testimony in Support of House Bill 1354
Sales and Use Tax - Services**

**House Ways and Means Committee
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1:00 PM**

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The Maryland State Education Association supports House Bill 1354, legislation that expands the 6% sales tax rate to cover select luxury services.

MSEA represents 75,000 educators and school employees who work in Maryland's public schools, teaching and preparing our 896,837 students for careers and jobs of the future. 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).

Over the last three years, educators across the state have been fully engaged in the most critical conversation we have had in a generation: how do we fundamentally, equitably, and sustainably improve our schools and prepare our students for the jobs of today and the future. From the beginning, this conversation has appropriately been focused on research-based best practices to develop the policy reforms necessary to make this happen. And from the beginning, it has been clear that supporting these world-class schools and programs would require new investments in state and local funding.

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 work of the Commission on Innovation and Excellence in Education (Kirwan Commission) further recommends 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.

The Kirwan Commission has determined that Maryland will need to invest substantially more resources into education for our citizens become truly successful in the very competitive national and global economies. This is the time to be locating and allocating more resources to education, and House Bill 1354 can be part of that funding solution, depending on how this committee and the General Assembly acts on other sales tax measures presented this session.

Our kids can't wait. That is why MSEA urges actions to fully fund the new formulas associated with the Blueprint for Maryland's Future and supports a favorable report on House Bill 1354.