

Testimony SUPPORT of Senate Bill 30
State Finance and Procurement – Appropriation Reductions
(Board of Public Works Budget Reduction Clarification Act)

Senate Budget and Taxation Committee
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The Maryland State Education Association supports SB 30, The Board of Public Works Budget Reduction Clarification Act, which would add much needed transparency to the operations of the Board of Public Works. This bill clarifies the Governor's authority to reduce appropriations in the state budget, and requires the BPW and the Department of Budget and Management give notice of 10 business days of any such reduction proposal.

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).

SB 30 builds on the work of The Board of Public Works Transparency Act of 2016, which passed both chambers nearly unanimously. That bill required the Secretary of Budget and Management to publish any proposed reduction 3 days before the BPW's Wednesday meeting. In practice, that means that proposed cuts are published on the Friday before the meeting. With only 3 days, advocates and the public have limited time to reach out to members of the Board of Public works to educate them about the possible impact of those cuts. SB 30 is necessary and increases that window to 10 days.

While the Administration may not be able to reduce an appropriation for public schools, just this summer the Governor proposed cuts to teacher pensions, disparity grants for local governments, and funding for the Maryland State Department of Education. This bill would give the public more time to organize and understand proposed cuts that affect education in the future.

This bill adds needed additional transparency to tough budget decisions. **MSEA urges a Favorable Report on Senate Bill 30.**