

COURTNEY WATSON  
Legislative District 9B  
Howard County

Economic Matters Committee

*Subcommittees*

Banking, Consumer Protection,  
and Commercial Law

Property and Casualty Insurance

Vice Chair, Democratic Caucus



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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

January 28, 2022

HB-68 (SB-40) Interagency Commission on School Construction – Systemic Renovation  
Projects – Eligibility

**SPONSOR:** Delegate Courtney Watson

**POSITION:** Favorable

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Good afternoon Chair McIntosh, Vice Chair Chang, and members of the committee. Thank you for allowing me to present House Bill 68, which will require the Interagency Commission on School Construction (IAC) to consider systemic renovations regardless of cost. As it currently stands, the IAC only considers systemic renovation efforts if the projects are valued above \$4M. Due to this requirement, many high-impact, low-cost projects are disqualified.

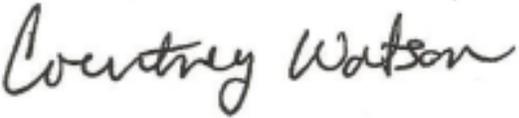
When the Build to Learn Act of 2020 was passed, many of us anticipated funds from revenue bonds being used equally to cover costs of new construction as well as renovation. Deferred maintenance in our public schools is just as common in Garrett County as it is in Howard County or on the Eastern Shore, so this funding is critical to keeping our students in safe, healthy learning environments.

However, last year I spoke with the Howard County Executive and he brought to my attention the fact that several projects in Howard County - including boiler replacements and roofing at several elementary schools - fall below this \$4M figure. The Baltimore County Executive, who submitted favorable testimony at the Senate hearing on this bill, confirmed that many of their projects would be disqualified under the IAC's current interpretation. As such, this legislation would merely clarify this original intent.

Most of these necessary projects that would lose funding by the IAC's new consideration would disproportionately impact the most vulnerable students in our communities. For these reasons, I respectfully request a favorable report on House Bill 68.

Thank you for your consideration of this bill. I am happy to answer any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Courtney Watson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Delegate Courtney Watson  
Howard County District 9B