



The County Commissioners of Kent County
P. Thomas Mason, President | Ronald H. Fithian, Member | Robert N. Jacob, Jr., Member
Shelley L. Heller, County Administrator | Thomas N. Yeager, County Attorney

March 8, 2022

The Honorable Maggie McIntosh
Room 121, House Office Building
6 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: SUPPORT of House Bill 1240 / Senate Bill 986 Education – Low-Density Calculation – Mandated Funding

Dear Chair McIntosh and Members of the Appropriations Committee:

The County Commissioners of Kent County, Maryland support House Bill 1240 / Senate Bill 986 Education – Low-Density Calculation – Mandated Funding. Kent County has a small school system and meets the population density and student enrollment limitation required for the low-density calculation. Kent County has been identified as one of the local jurisdictions most impacted by the Blueprint for Maryland's Future in terms of increases in per-pupil appropriations relative to local wealth. The required local appropriation is much greater than pre-Blueprint amounts. Kent County's education spending growth is expected to outpace local revenues and moreover, the gap for Kent County (1.1 percentage points) has been identified as especially large. To fund the Blueprint, Kent County would have to significantly increase property taxes to fund the increased appropriations. The fiscal stress to Kent County is repeatedly noted in the *Local Fiscal Impact of Implementing the Blueprint for Maryland's Future*. Department of Legislative Services, Office of Policy Analysis, January 2022.

House Bill 1240 / Senate Bill 896 proposes to establish the appropriation of State funds to support counties with low-density and a low student enrollment count. Kent County's local revenue growth cannot keep pace with the fiscal impact of implementing the Blueprint. Kent County will not be able to meet its financial obligations of mandated funding for education without the State's appropriation in an equal amount to the Low-Density Calculation.

We respectfully submit our full support to HB1240 / SB986.

Very truly yours,
THE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
OF KENT COUNTY, MARYLAND

P. Thomas Mason, President

Ronald H. Fithian, Member

Robert N. Jacob, Jr., Member

KCC: sew

cc: The Honorable Stephen S. Hershey, Jr.
The Honorable Jay A. Jacobs
The Honorable Steven J. Arentz
The Honorable Jefferson L. Ghrist
Dr. Karen M. Couch, Superintendent, Kent County Public Schools