



Board of Education of Howard County
Testimony Submitted to the Maryland House of Delegates,
Appropriations Committee
March 22, 2022

Board of Education
of Howard County

Vicky Cutroneo, *Chair*

Antonia Watts, *Vice Chair*

Christina Delmont-Small

Yun Lu, Ph.D.

Jennifer Swickard Mallo

Jolene Mosley

Chao Wu, Ph.D.

Peter J. Banyas
Student Member

Michael J. Martirano, Ed.D.
*Superintendent
Secretary/Treasurer*

SB0040: FAVORABLE

**Interagency Commission on School Construction – Systemic Renovation
Projects – Eligibility**

The Board of Education of Howard County (the Board) supports **SB0040 Interagency Commission on School Construction – Systemic Renovation Projects – Eligibility** to clarify that the Interagency Commission on School Construction (IAC) shall consider systemic renovation projects eligible for Supplemental Public School Construction Finance and Facilities Funds, regardless of costs.

The passage of the Built to Learn Act (BTL) in 2021 offered local school systems an additional funding option for school construction through a Bond initiative from the Maryland Stadium Authority (MSA). BTL, however, does not define project types to be funded, only Public School Facility Projects, which has caused confusion for local school systems about whether systemic projects will be considered. Guidance from the IAC most recently addressed this issue through [FAQs released in September 2021](#) which state “There is consensus between the IAC and MSA that it would be best to utilize the special-revenue-bond funds and MSA’s services under BTL for new, replacement, and large renovation projects. However, BTL funds may be used for small additions and for systemic renovations with a minimum total project cost of at least \$4 million.”

SB0040 removes the confusion and clearly defines that a systemic project, regardless of total project cost, would be considered for BTL funding. In Howard County, our student population has experienced exponential growth while current deferred maintenance projects total nearly half a billion dollars for the school system. Balancing the total cost of facility ownership includes both expanding school capacity needs and maintaining those structures, grounds, and equipment over time. The Board supports the local flexibility afforded by this bill to use BTL funds as needed for capital and systemic projects.

For these reasons, we urge a FAVORABLE report of SB0040 from this Committee.