



## House Bill 1290

### *Education - Public School Construction - Funding and Administration*

MACo Position: **SUPPORT**

To: Budget and Taxation Committee

Date: March 29, 2022

From: Brianna January

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **SUPPORTS** HB 1290. This bill establishes a series of policies to guide future school construction and capital projects as Maryland moves into implementation of the landmark education legislation The Blueprint for Maryland's Future and Built to Learn Act. The bill also addresses some major concerns of local governments about the funding and state/local share of said projects.

This bill represents the hard work of the Workgroup on the Assessment and Funding of School Facilities, on which counties were pleased to participate. The recommendations of that workgroup, which have become the foundation for the policy suggestions of HB 1290, reasonably balance the needs of local governments to build and maintain safe, long-lasting school facilities and manage fiscal responsibility.

Counties are particularly pleased with the bill's state add-on incentives regarding total cost of ownership, net zero projects, and aid to school projects with high concentrations of poverty. Counties are also enthusiastic about HB 1290's establishment and implementation of the Local Revolving Loan Fund, to allow low-debt capacity counties to forward fund state and local funding for capital school projects. Notably, Frederick County Executive and former MACo President Jan Gardner helped inform and guide the interim workgroup's recommendations for the loan program and ensured that its terms were favorable for the diverse fiscal needs and realities of Maryland's 24 jurisdictions.

The House adopted technical and clarifying amendments that further implement the intentions of the interim work group. Counties were pleased to participate on the interim Workgroup on the Assessment and Funding of School Facilities. HB 1290 represents the hard work of that group to ensure equitable policies to guide school construction under The Blueprint for Maryland's Future and Built to Learn Act implementation. For these reasons, MACo **SUPPORTS** HB 1290 and urges a **FAVORABLE** report.