

Submitted Testimony by Congressman Steny H. Hoyer (MD-05) on H.B. 890 / S.B. 962

“I want to thank Chairwoman Atterbeary and Vice Chair Washington for allowing me to share testimony today on H.B. 890 / S.B. 962. This legislation is so important for the ability of Maryland teachers to provide their students with the best-possible education, and I want to thank my good friend Delegate Jazz Lewis for spearheading the effort to address this issue and empower teachers in our state to bring class sizes down.

“Everyone knows that when teachers have to share their attention among more students, the amount of time they can spend with each individual student is diminished. Smaller class sizes make for better learning, for more care and attention given to the unique learning needs of each student, and for better student-performance outcomes. It is no surprise that teachers in Maryland and across the country continue to call for smaller classes so that they can provide their students with every opportunity to learn and keep up with curricula.

“It is disturbing that Maryland law currently prohibits teachers, when organized and bargaining collectively, from discussing class sizes during contract negotiations. Delegate Lewis’s legislation would change that, empowering teachers to negotiate for smaller class sizes and better student-to-teacher ratios in our public schools. This is something I know many of my constituents would greatly appreciate in their children’s schools – a change supported by families throughout our state.

“I’ve been proud to stand with teachers and parents throughout my time in Congress and – before that – while serving in Annapolis. I’m proud today to give Delegate Lewis’s legislation my strongest possible support, and I want to thank him again for being a leader for teachers, students, and families in Prince George’s County and throughout our state. I urge its approval in Committee and its passage by the House of Delegates soon.”