

Education - Collective Bargaining - Certificated Employees - Class  
Size

**HB 890/SB 962**

Official Testimony

Position: **FAVORABLE**

To the Ways and Means Committee,

My name is Peter Hirsch, and I'm a Takoma Park resident, a parent of students in Montgomery County Schools, and a teacher in Baltimore City Public Schools. I support the Education - Collective Bargaining - Certificated Employees - Class Size Act (HB 890/SB 962).

I believe that passing of this bill is essential because I know from first hand experience how beneficial smaller class sizes are. I taught in private schools for 5 years with small class sizes before coming to teach in Baltimore City 18 years ago. When I made the switch to public schools, I learned to adapt to larger class sizes and give high school students opportunities for individual attention and relatively quick feedback on assignments so long as classes were not excessively large. Unfortunately, too often I have had classes of 35+ in a small room that can only accommodate 33 students. When this happens, I am forced to hope that some students are absent so that everyone can sit. I also struggle to give all students the attention they deserve and to return assignments in a reasonable time as my overall grading load can be 165 children or more. I know that small class sizes don't guarantee quality education, but I also know that exceedingly large class sizes certainly cause the educational effectiveness of teachers to diminish. That is why I hope that the teachers union here in Baltimore can begin to negotiate class sizes as a part of contracts. Although we may not all come to an agreement on what the ideal class size is, it is a discussion worth having as it certainly is in the best interests of both the students and the teachers in the state of Maryland. That is why I respectfully urge this committee to issue a favorable report on HB 890/SB 962, the Education - Collective Bargaining - Certificated Employees - Class Size Act

Sincerely,

Peter Hirsch  
Baltimore City Public School Teacher  
(443) 604-5624