

# **FINAL SB314 Sales and Use Tax - Musical Instrument**

Uploaded by: Grace Wilson

Position: FAV



## SB314 SALES AND USE TAX – MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS - EXEMPTION

February 8, 2023

BUDGET & TAXATION

### SUPPORT

Grace Wilson, Acting Legislative & Policy Specialist (410.440.1758)

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Anne Arundel County Public Schools (AACPS) supports **SB314 Sales and Use Tax – Musical Instruments - Exemption**. This bill exempts the sale or rental of musical instruments to be used by students in elementary school, secondary school, postsecondary institutions, or who are receiving home instruction from the sales and use tax.

Music is a unique and powerful form of communication that transcends the limits of verbal expression. It involves and affects both thought and emotion and makes a unique contribution to the growth and development of children and society as a whole. Approximately 19,600 AACPS students are participating in music courses that require the purchase or rental of a musical instrument this school year. An additional 1,496 students are participating in extracurricular or co-curricular activities that require the purchase or rental of a musical instrument.

However, the cost of purchasing or renting a musical instrument can be significant to the families of student's participating in music courses, extracurriculars, or co-curricular activities. Typical musical instruments purchased or rented by students include clarinets, flutes, and violins. Each of these instruments costs approximately \$600 to purchase. Without the exemption from the sales and use tax created by this bill, families would pay an additional \$36 for the purchase of such an instrument. More expensive instruments used by students, including the French horn and the tenor saxophone, can cost more than \$1,600. In these cases, the sales tax savings to families would be approximately \$100.

This bill has the potential to result in significance savings to the families of Anne Arundel County Public School students who participate in music courses, extracurriculars, or co-curricular activities. In turn, this legislation supports the arts learning community and advances arts-rich, lifelong learning in and through the arts and music for all Marylanders.

Accordingly, AACPS respectfully requests a **FAVORABLE** committee report on SB314.

# **Musical Instruments 2023 SB533.pdf**

Uploaded by: Justin Ready

Position: FAV

JUSTIN READY  
Legislative District 5  
Carroll County

Finance Committee



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THE SENATE OF MARYLAND  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

February 8, 2023

**SB 314 Sales and Use Tax – Musical Instruments - Exemption**

Chairman Guzzone, Vice Chairman Rosapepe, and members of the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee;

Senate Bill 314 exempts the sale or rental of musical instruments used by a student from the State sales and use tax. The student must be (1) enrolled in an elementary or secondary school, or postsecondary institution or (2) registered with a local school system as receiving home instruction.

Under current law, students in Maryland across elementary, secondary, and post-secondary institutions are required to pay sales and use tax when purchasing or renting a musical instrument. This bill seeks to exempt students throughout their educational music career.

Most people understand the benefits of music programs in public schools intuitively, and many are aware of the research that has shown an investment in music education funding drives positive student and school outcomes – including better attendance, academic performance, teacher satisfaction and student social-emotional skills like confidence and focus.

I respectfully request a favorable report on Senate Bill 314.

# **SB314- Favorable.pdf**

Uploaded by: Liliana Norkaitis

Position: FAV

Maryland State Senate  
Budget and Taxation Committee  
SB314

Senators,

My name is Liliana Norkaitis, and I am asking for your favorable report of SB314. Like tens of thousands of students in Maryland, I started playing an instrument in elementary school. I've been playing the cello since 5th grade and gained valuable traits that are exclusive to learning an instrument. Over the last 8 years, I mastered my craft and not only picked up a new party trick, but I improved coordination, memory, cognitive thinking, confidence, and found a new way to relieve stress.

In October, I finally decided to end my rental program and purchased my own cello. I sought out my price range without thinking about the sales tax and was astonished when my bill was an additional \$120 because of the tax. I do not live in a financially comfortable household, so this was a setback just to be able to continue doing what I love. Our school system has incorporated music into its curriculum, but it is inaccessible to a lot of families who cannot afford an additional \$100+ to cover the lump sum or the few dollars extra every month in a rental program. When there are multiple children in a household, music becomes even more inaccessible. No one should be barred from participating in a course because they cannot afford the very thing that is required for participation. This notion that only people who can afford to purchase an instrument can participate in a class is very damaging to our education environment. Music is an incredible thing that connects everyone and instills cultural awareness. The first step to ensuring more students continue with music through all their years of schooling is to eliminate the sales tax on the rental and purchases of musical instruments for Marylanders like me because every student deserves the accessibility to play an instrument without the burden of a financial setback.

The fiscal note says that the expected decrease in sales tax revenue will be \$1.4 million, but that is just 0.0002% of the total tax revenue of \$6.2 billion, and this is not the state's largest source of revenue. This tax break is a very small price to pay to alleviate the pockets of Maryland families.

I will have my instrument well after I am out of school, so I am not here today so that I, personally, can save \$120 on my next cello. I am here for the thousands of students who cannot afford an instrument. I am asking for your favorable report of SB314 because a favorable report means progress in equal access to a skill that will keep kids out of dangerous activity and engaged in a magnificent craft. Let's reward the Marylanders of tomorrow by making music more accessible.

Thank you,

Liliana Norkaitis

# **AEMS SB314 Testimony.pdf**

Uploaded by: Rachel McGrain

Position: FAV



Feb 7, 2023

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**Subject:** SB314 Sales and Use Tax - Musical Instruments - Exemption

**Position:** Favorable

To Chair Guzzone and members of the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee,

As a musician, former music teacher, and current executive director of Arts Education in Maryland Schools (AEMS), I support SB314.

Arts Education in Maryland Schools (AEMS) is committed to ensuring that all students in the state of Maryland have access to high quality arts education. We envision a public education system in Maryland that supports, cultivates, nurtures, and uplifts ALL students' creativity through a robust arts education experience so that they can thrive in a healthy society. AEMS supports SB314 because it will provide greater access to musical instruments to more students.

As a student growing up in Howard County public schools, I enjoyed ample access to music and arts education that shaped my growth and development. Having access to band in school helped me develop self-confidence, make life-long friends, and sharpen my critical thinking skills. I saw many of these same benefits in the students I had the honor to teach in Baltimore City. I was fortunate that my family was able to afford to rent me a trumpet starting in 4th grade, and then purchase an upgraded model in 8th grade that I still use today.

However, the cost of music equipment is high and can be a barrier to all children having access to the incredible benefits music education has to offer. Reducing cost by exempting musical instruments from Sales and Use Tax is one small way to reduce this obstacle. For example, renting a standard trumpet currently costs about \$35 per month. That adds up to about \$24 in sales tax per year, which could instead go towards materials such as valve oil, tuning slide grease, and a mouthpiece brush that would allow the renting student to take responsibility for care of their instrument.

Learning an instrument has the potential to change people's lives, like it did for mine and for many of my students. All students deserve that opportunity, and SB314 will help increase access to music education by lowering the barrier to participate. Removing barriers to students' artistic experience is worth making a reality.

Thank you for your hard work making Maryland a better place for the arts and for students. We all benefit when we invest in our students.

Sincerely,

**Rachel McGrain**  
**Executive Director, AEMS**

190 W. Ostend Street, Suite 210 Baltimore, Maryland 21230

410.837.5500 / [www.aems-edu.org](http://www.aems-edu.org)

 @artsedmaryland



**SB314\_FAV\_MRA.pdf**

Uploaded by: Sarah Price

Position: FAV

# MARYLAND RETAILERS ASSOCIATION

*The Voice of Retailing in Maryland*



**SB314 Sales and Use Tax - Musical Instruments - Exemption**  
**Senate Budget and Taxation Committee**  
**February 8, 2023**

**Position: Favorable**

**Background:** SB314 would exempt the sale or rental of musical instruments to be used by students from the sales and use tax.

**Comments:** The Maryland Retailers Association supports SB314, which would exempt the sale or rental of musical instruments from the sales and use tax when the instruments are to be used by students in Maryland. Access to music and the arts has a positive impact on childhood development, yet the cost of arts programs, materials, and equipment can be prohibitive for many families. Exempting musical instruments from the sales and use tax would make participation in school and extracurricular music programs more accessible for low-income students in Maryland.

We would urge a favorable report on SB314. Thank you for your consideration.

# **Letter of Information – Senate Bill 314 – Sales an**

Uploaded by: Justin Hayes

Position: INFO

**Letter of Information – Senate Bill 314 – Sales and Use Tax – Musical Instruments -  
Exemption**

*Budget and Tax Committee  
February 8, 2023*

This bill provides that a sale or rental of a musical instrument is exempt from the sales and use tax if that instrument is to be used by a student who is: (1) enrolled in an elementary school, a secondary school, or a postsecondary institution; or (2) registered with a local school system as receiving home instruction.

The Comptroller notes that the language of this would require a business selling or renting musical instruments to know, at the time of sale or rental, the educational status of a potential user of the instrument. In many cases, a parent or guardian may be the purchaser rather than the student.

The Comptroller anticipates it may not reliably be able to audit whether this particular exemption has been appropriately allowed by businesses selling or renting musical instruments due to a lack of information about the individual who will use the musical instrument, absent the addition of an information-gathering requirement imposed on the seller.

As always, the Comptroller's Office is willing and available to discuss these concerns or any questions you may have at your convenience. Please contact Justin Hayes, Director of State Affairs at [jhayes@marylandtaxes.gov](mailto:jhayes@marylandtaxes.gov) or 410-260-7696.

