My name is Crystal Edgley and I am writing to you today as a parent of three students at Monocacy Valley Montessori Public Charter School in Frederick, Maryland to ask you for your support of SB0646 [School Construction - Public Charter School Facility Fund - Establishment](#) sponsored by Senator McCray.

Monocacy Valley Montessori Public Charter School was the first charter school in Maryland and will be celebrating its 20th anniversary this year, the same amount of years that we've had the Charter School Law in Maryland. Our family has been a part of the MVMPCS community for nine years. MVMPCS serves students from Pre-K 3 year olds through 8th grade, and will be adding a high school class next year. We are very proud of our school; of the students, our wonderful staff, administrators and the families who devote so much of their time to making the school a success. The one thing about our school that has been troubling is the facility itself, and the lack of funds to maintain it. We have learned to handle it with courtesy and grace which are important pillars of a montessori education. We've come to love certain quirks about our very old building and have worked hard to create a welcoming environment, but all of the courtesy and grace in the world cannot fix the fact that it is falling apart and we don't have the funds to fix it.

We lease our building and it is being sold. The solution, after several grueling years of searching, is to move to a new building, and to try and convert it from a medical office building into a school. This cause, at times, has seemed daunting and impossible because of our lack of funds for the purpose. It took years to have an offer accepted on a building and to finally move into the contract phase. It's been scary to not be certain that we'll have a school to come back to each school year. To add to the frustration, when issues arise with our building as they frequently do, the funds get taken from our blueprint dollars leaving less money available to provide for better education in the classroom. We've been at the mercy of a landlord for several years, so when the rent is raised we have to make sacrifices elsewhere. One of those sacrifices was to cut classes, causing a higher number of pupils in the existing classes. We've had to close school early some days or cancel school altogether because of plumbing or heating/cooling issues. We have classrooms that are extremely difficult to heat/cool due to the age of our building, leading to undesirable learning conditions. Our play area is a parking lot, the same parking lot that staff and visitors park in. We have a small mulch yard for younger children, but no play structures and no green space. These facility funding issues are not unique to our school. There are three charter schools in Frederick, Maryland and they all face these types of problems.

In our Montessori classrooms we use a peace rose to help facilitate communication and problem resolution. Today I'm holding the figurative peace rose and asking you to please support the passing of SB0646. Our charter schools add so much to our communities. We are an equal opportunity school and serve a beautifully diverse population of students. As part of the public school system our students deserve to have the same quality of facilities and funding as their traditional public school peers. Our students should be able to come to school focused on learning in safe and adequate buildings. I know that this possible $2000 per pupil allotment will benefit not just the students but also our teachers and administrators who do not currently

have equitable teaching conditions to their professional peers. This funding does not impact the Blueprint formula or take funding away from any other public school students, as the funding would come from the State's General Fund. The passing of SB0646 will not only benefit my three students, but also the 24,000 charter school students statewide and many more generations of students to come.

Thank you for your time and consideration.
Sincerely,
Crystal Edgley