

Testimony from , Baltimore City Public Schools student, District 45 Resident

## SB206: Education - Collective Bargaining - Certificated Employees - Class Size

Official Testimony

Position: **FAVORABLE**

To the Senate Finance Committee, My name is Nora Shapiro, and I'm a Baltimore city resident. I support SB206. This bill will repeal the prohibition on a public school employer negotiating the maximum number of students assigned to a class.

Passing this bill is essential because it will allow for a better learning experience for both students and teachers. Right now, teachers across Baltimore City can not legally bring up wanting a smaller class size. I believe that teachers should be able to at least talk about it with their employers, whether they would actually end up getting them or not. Having discussions about this won't hurt, if anything, it would make more sense to have the floor open to talk about it and see both sides of the story.

I personally went to an elementary/middle school for 9 years with around 20 students in the class. This was a very hands-on, individualized learning experience in which I felt very comfortable in my surroundings. I think that comfort is a big part of schooling and something that a lot of people look for. This bill, SB206, could attract more people towards Maryland schools. The more people that are attracted to the schools, the more people will want to come to Maryland. This would hopefully increase state funds through income and sales tax with potential citizens, workers, customers and so on.

Now that I am in highschool, I had to transition from 20 students to around 30 in each class. This was a pretty big transition and it really came clear that a smaller classroom setting is a better option. Now having to adapt to bigger classrooms, I have to get used to people blatantly disrespecting and neglecting others. With bigger class sizes, it is easy to get looked over by not just other students, but teachers as well. Teachers have to be in charge of looking over so many other students at the same time that they can sometimes miss when a student is really struggling.

Research indicates that when a class size is Reduced by 7-10 people, there are benefits in both the students' achievements and mental health.

School and mental health go hand in hand for me. I think that if teachers were to have had smaller class sizes they could have noticed that I wasn't doing so well. Things would

have been a lot better for me. I know that this is the same for a lot of other students my age and students in general. It's really important that teachers and students can create good relationships, and it's a lot easier to achieve when there's a smaller class size.

I respectfully urge this committee to issue a favorable report on SB0206

Sincerely,

*Nora Shapiro*

SOMOS

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## Research:

- Brookings Institute 2011: “[Class Size: What Research Says and What it Means for State Policy](#)”
  - Average class size is 15.3 (based on data compiled [here](#) from National Center for Education Statistics)
  - Largest impact for class size reduction from STAR was “the positive effects of class size were largest for black students, economically disadvantaged students, and boys.”
  - “It appears that very large class-size reductions, on the order of magnitude of 7-10 fewer students per class, can have meaningful long-term effects on student achievement and perhaps on non-cognitive outcomes.”
- NCTQ 2019: “<https://www.nctq.org/blog/A-sizable-opportunity:-thinking-strategically-about-class-size>”
  - “Of our sample of 124 large districts (which includes the 100 largest districts in the country and the largest district in each state), we find that almost all (82 percent) put strict limits on class sizes in at least some grades.”
  - See table below for top nine districts from 2019 for average sizes by grade
  - Anne Arundel County Schools: goal for lower class size limits or goals for schools with more vulnerable student populations
- STAR, Tennessee 1980s
  - Compared classes of 15 to classes of 22, randomized groups (32% reduction)
  - Elementary students outperformed by .22 over four years, or equivalent of 3 months instruction
- SSRN, NY State: [Effect of class size on teacher attrition](#)
  - A decrease in class size from 23 to 20 students, under a district-wide policy, decreases the probability that a teacher leaves a school by 4.2 percentage points.
- 2009: NY Times: Class Size Around the World:  
<https://archive.nytimes.com/economix.blogs.nytimes.com/2009/09/11/class-size-around-the-world/>

## STEP BY STEP GUIDE TO SUBMITTING YOUR TESTIMONY:

### Step 1: Finish Writing Your Testimony

SB00031/HB0153 - School Board Bill Toolkit:

[https://docs.google.com/document/d/1W4KGFcigPgVYZwtdqLY\\_RAGCa7hEKL9MeJriGzqdY/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1W4KGFcigPgVYZwtdqLY_RAGCa7hEKL9MeJriGzqdY/edit?usp=sharing)

HB0085/SB0206 - Class Size Bill Toolkit:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1aR9-ottSDoL18oEpObC4BhAvizrroiQLRLRqbEpLtCc/edit>

### Step 2: Sign-In or Make MyMGA Account

<https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/mgawebsite/MyMGATracking/WitnessSignup>

### Step 3: Go to "Witness Sign Up" & look for your bill

Decide if you want to submit written, virtual oral, live oral, or "both" which is written and virtual or live oral. Select that option and then hit SAVE.

**Step 4: Wait for your testimony ZOOM link the morning of the hearing (if giving spoken testimony)**  
It will come from this email: no-reply@mlis.state.md.us

**Step 5: Watch MGA youtube channel**

Watch your hearing & jump on when your bill is called

<https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/mgawebsite/Information/YouTubeChannelInfo>

