

23746 LOVELY LANE
CHESTERTOWN MD 21620

February 2, 2024

Delegate Ben Barnes, Chair
Delegate Mark S. Chang, Vice Chair
Appropriations Committee
House Office Building, Rom 121
Annapolis, MD 21401

Bill: HB 365 – School Construction - Local Cost-Share - Alterations

Position: Support

Dear Chair Barnes, Vice Chair Chang, and Members of the Committee,

I am writing as a retired school mental health professional with a long career in the public schools of Maryland. Since moving to Kent County in 2012 I have become deeply involved with the Kent County Public Schools, and I am very aware of the age, outdated design, and decaying physical condition of some of our schools. I am writing in strong support of HB 365, which will enable KCPS to begin to address these issues.

Dilapidated schools are not conducive to learning. Worse, they are bad for student, parent and staff morale, and they can even be detrimental to student mental health. Construction started on Kent County Middle School in 1950, and after almost 75 years the building is in pretty bad shape! In addition, its current layout includes many classrooms without windows, and does not allow for a functional science laboratory.

HB 365 would enable Kent County to move forward with construction of a new middle school. Given the current fiscal situation of the county, paying for a new school would be next to impossible without the additional funding from the state this bill would provide. I urge a favorable report on HB 365. If I can provide any additional information or be of any assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me at wmflook@gmail.com. Thank you.

Respectfully submitted,

William Flook, Ph.D.

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