

Good afternoon honored members of the committee,

My name is Shephard Nnameka, and I am a 6th grader at Frederick Classical Charter School. I am here with friends and members of the Fredrick County Charter school community to advocate for increased funding for our schools' facilities. As a member of this community, I have witnessed firsthand the challenges our school faces due to inadequate facilities, and I believe that addressing the issue of is vital to our continued academic success and well-being.

Charter Schools are renowned for their commitment to academic excellence and the well-rounded development of scholars and I can testify to that on behalf of my brother, Jordan who is now successfully navigating through a traditional public high school as a 10th grader. He came into Frederick Classical Charter school in 4th grade as a scholar with unique learning abilities who was struggling with complicated concepts. But thanks to a carefully curated plan set for him through the classical pedagogy, he graduated 8th grade not only understanding complicated concepts but also how to approach, dissect, digest and even teach them to his peers. The education he received for a few years in a charter school has also helped him be successful even now as high school. All of this may not have been possible for people like my brother without the strong foundation that the opportunity of charter schools bring.

This is why I believe paying almost three quarters of a million dollars every year of our per pupil allocation to rent our facilities is not the best use of our funds neither is a lack of essential resources such as sufficient classrooms, laboratories, and recreational spaces because we are in a rented office space.

The lack of adequate facilities not only impedes our academic progress but also affects our overall well-being. Investing in our school's facilities is not only an investment in our education but also in the future of our community. By providing us with the resources we need to thrive, you will empower us to reach our full potential and become productive members of society.

Therefore, I urge you to please prioritize funding for the renovation, expansion, or construction of facilities for Public Charter Schools by passing Bill HB1061. Doing this will demonstrate your commitment to ensuring that every student has access to a high-quality education in a safe and supportive environment.

Thank you for considering this petition and for your continued support of our school community. Together, we can create a brighter future for all public-school students, charter schools included.

Thank you.

Shephard Nnameka, 6th grader

Frederick Classical Charter School.