



Chesapeake Charter School Alliance, LTD (CCSA)  
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March 1, 2024

Dear House Member,

My name is Carrie Campbell, and I am the Accountant for the Chesapeake Public Charter School in Lexington Park, Maryland. I am providing written testimony asking you for your support of HB1061. Chesapeake Public Charter School was established in 2007 in St. Mary's County, MD. We are currently serving 540 K-8 students, and we focus on the whole child. The success of our school is undeniable. We outperform the local LEA and the state of Maryland on standardized assessments, and we continue to weigh our lottery to prioritize economically disadvantaged students. All of this is being done without capital funding support. We currently have to utilize our PPA funds that we receive from the county to pay for approximately \$900K in facility expenses that could be used to educationally support our students.

LEAs can utilize state and federal funding to that are not available to public charter schools to pay for their buildings or provide any capital improvements. This was unavailable to us, so we had to utilize a USDA rural facilities program to purchase our building for \$3.5 million dollars. This alone is \$400k that we spend a year that could be better spent on providing additional educational support to our students.

HB1061 seeks to establish a fund managed by the IAC that allows public charter schools to get reimbursed for their actual expenses of up to \$2,000 per pupil annually for eligible facilities-related expenses. There are also federal funds that are available to help pay for these funds for the first few years.

Charter school students are public school students, and they deserve to be educated in a safe, welcoming, adequate school building just like their traditional public-school peers. Why do charter school operators have to pull funding out of their operating dollars to pay for their buildings, while traditional schools and LEAs pull for capital funding and general fund? This isn't equitable. Through your support, we can work to close inequities public charter school students, families, and teachers experience in their school buildings each day.

We look forward to the hearing on March 5<sup>th</sup> and your support of HB1061, School Construction – Public Charter School Facility Fund. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Carrie Campbell  
Accountant