

Dear Delegate Kevin Harris,

My name is Caressa Rolle Saturne, a proud parent of a second grader at Chesapeake Public Charter School in St. Mary's County. I am reaching out to express my strong support for HB1061 - School Construction - Public Charter School Facility Fund - Establishment, sponsored by Delegate Young, which is slated for your review as a member of the House Appropriations Committee on March 5th.

Maryland's public charter schools are a vital component of our state's education system, serving over 24,000 students. The passage of HB1061 is crucial; it promises to benefit students, educators, and charter communities by providing dedicated funding for facilities-related expenses without impacting the Blueprint formula or diverting resources from other public schools. This bill proposes the establishment of a fund managed by the IAC, offering up to \$2,000 per pupil annually for eligible expenses, thereby allowing Blueprint funds to be more effectively allocated towards direct educational purposes.

Public charter schools currently face significant disparities in facilities funding compared to their traditional public school counterparts, often operating in older buildings that lack adequate space and amenities. This inequity not only affects the learning environment but also places an undue financial burden on charter schools, diverting essential educational funding towards maintenance and operations. HB1061 seeks to address these challenges by ensuring equitable support for charter school facilities, emphasizing accountability, transparency, and fiscal responsibility.

Charter school students deserve the same quality of education and facilities as those in traditional public schools. Supporting HB1061 is a step towards rectifying the inequities faced by charter school communities, ensuring that every child has access to a safe, conducive learning environment. As the charter school community eagerly anticipates the bill's hearing, we are hopeful for your support, knowing that it represents a significant stride towards fairness and excellence in public education for all Maryland students.

Thank you for considering my perspective on this important matter. I, along with the broader charter school community, look forward to your favorable response and support for HB1061.

Sincerely,

Caressa Rolle Saturne