

FAVORABLE
House Bill 535
Maryland Task Force on Educator Housing

House Environment and Transportation Committee
House Ways and Means Committee
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Government Relations

The Maryland State Education Association supports House Bill 535, which would create a task force to evaluate and make recommendations on options for addressing the lack of access to attainable housing for Maryland's educators. The proposed task force would also look at the connections between lack of housing and the educator shortage our schools are facing.

MSEA represents 75,000 educators and school employees who work in Maryland's public schools, teaching and preparing our almost 900,000 students so they can pursue their dreams. MSEA also represents 39 local affiliates in every county across the state of Maryland, and our parent affiliate is the 3 million-member National Education Association (NEA).

The staffing shortage affects the academic achievement, emotional wellness, and safety of our students. Students and families are faced with more trauma, unaddressed social emotional needs, societal divisiveness, and high levels of stress. We appreciate this bill's intent to address the shortage from a different angle. Importantly, this bill recognizes that there is a shortage among employees beyond just teachers, and that lack of affordable housing can exacerbate this problem.

We believe this bill will bring the right stakeholders together to look at this issue and determine how best state and local governments can work together to ensure that educators have access to affordable housing but can also afford to actually live in the communities in which they work.

MSEA urges a favorable report of House Bill 535.