

**Testimony in OPPOSITION of Senate (SB) 429: Excellence in Maryland Public Schools Act by  
Dr. William Reid  
Budget and Taxation Committee/Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee  
Position: Oppose  
February 19, 2025**

Good afternoon, Chair, Vice Chair, and the Budget and Taxation Committee/Education, Energy, and Environment Committee members. I am Dr. William Reid, and I reside in Frederick, Maryland. I serve as an Executive Board Member of the Rural Maryland Council, a leader and board member of Progressive Maryland, and the Chair of Frederick Progressives. I strongly oppose Senate Bill 429, which would significantly cut the promised education funding under the Blueprint for Maryland's Future.

This bill threatens the very investments our state has committed to making—investments in our students, our teachers, and the future of our communities. Cutting per-pupil foundation funding risks larger class sizes, fewer instructional materials, and reduced critical student services. Already stretched thin, teachers will likely leave the profession, deepening the educator shortage. Additionally, SB429 will delay crucial funding for community schools, further widening the achievement gap and depriving vulnerable students of the necessary educational support. Schools expecting to receive Concentration of Poverty grants will lack the resources for mental health services, after-school programs, and multilingual student support. Maryland promised to uplift and strengthen our education system with the Blueprint. This bill weakens that promise when schools need support the most. In Frederick County alone, we stand to lose \$3.3 million in community school funding between 2027 and 2031, with similar losses across other counties.

Instead of cutting funding, we must prioritize progressive revenue solutions like *Fair Share Maryland* to ensure we meet our commitments to students, educators, and families. The future of our schools, communities, and state depends on fully funding the Blueprint. I urge you to vote **no** on Senate Bill 429 and stand with those who believe in keeping Maryland's promise to its students. Thank you.