

Testimony in OPPOSITION of
Senate 429: Excellence in Maryland Public Schools Act

Budget and Taxation Committee/Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
Position: Oppose / February 12, 2025

My name is Nicole de la Torre, and I am a parent at Mount Rainier Elementary, and part of the PTO Board. I am submitting this testimony in strong opposition to Senate Bill 429, which would slash critical education funding promised under the Blueprint for Maryland's Future. This bill doesn't just cut dollars—it cuts opportunities for our children, support for our teachers, and resources our schools desperately need. It undermines the commitments our state has made to invest in students, educators, and the future of our communities. Our children deserve better.

Our kids deserve better. Cutting per-pupil foundation funding means fewer resources in the classroom—fewer teachers, outdated materials, and less support for students who need it most. Schools that are already stretched thin will be forced to make impossible choices, like increasing class sizes or cutting critical programs.

We've already seen how hard it is to fill essential teaching positions. Without competitive salaries and real support, more teachers will leave the profession, and our students will suffer. Instead of making it harder to attract and keep great educators, we should be investing in them.

Delays in funding for community schools will only widen the achievement gap, leaving vulnerable students without the resources they rely on. Schools that were promised additional support through Concentration of Poverty grants won't get the help they desperately need. These grants provide mental health services, after-school programs, and multilingual support—lifelines for so many families in our school community.

Our students, teachers, and families deserve stability, opportunity, and real investment—not more budget cuts. We must stand up for them now.

I urge you to reject Senate Bill 429 and prioritize the future of Maryland's students - prioritize generating progressive revenue through the passage of Fair Share Maryland. Cutting funding now will have long-term consequences that harm not just our schools, but our communities as a whole. Please vote no on SB429 and stand with those who believe in fully funding the Blueprint for Maryland's Future.

Thank you for your time and consideration.
Sincerely,

Nicole de la Torre
Mount Rainier Elementary Parent and PTO Co-Secretary (nicoledlt2@gmail.com)