



The Honorable Guy Guzzone, Chair
The Honorable Jim Rosapepe, Vice Chair
Budget and Taxation Committee
Maryland Senate
Annapolis, MD 21401

January 15th, 2025

Chair Guzzone, Vice Chair Rosapepe, and honorable members of this committee,

As a member of the Frederick County Council and a teacher for 35 years, I fully support Senate Bill 62: Task Force on Education Funding and Student Population Growth, and I encourage the committee to give this important legislation a favorable report.

During my career as a high school educator, unplanned increases to the school's student body was a regular obstacle. Before each school year began, I would be informed of how many students to expect in my classes, usually around 30 to 32, and prepare accordingly. Then, when the school year actually began and I received my student roster, the actual number of students would be closer to 40 than to 30.

In theory, adding a few extra students to each existing course doesn't sound too demanding — but logistically, it can severely impact resource scarcity. Over a dozen times throughout my career I would intend for students to be assigned a textbook, which they would then take home and use during homework or to study. Then, due to an unplanned increase in the class size, there wouldn't be enough books for each student. Instead, we would have to share the books during class, and I would have to print out sections of the book for assignments and reading. Not only did this slow the process and make it more difficult for the students to study and check their facts, but printing the assignments further increased the school's operational cost in printing paper and ink. Across an entire school for the entire year, that is thousands, if not hundreds of thousands, of expensive and otherwise unnecessary paper waste.

Books were far from the only example. This year, my wife, a fellow teacher, saw the school she worked at **run out of desks**. At the start of the year, the school had to scramble to find a desk for every student.

On a very practical level, the lag in education funding for growing counties is holding students back. The taskforce created by this legislation will ensure Maryland knows how to match school funding to the student populace, so that no student has to go without the tools for a quality education.

Sincerely,

Jerry Donald
Frederick County Council