

**FAVORABLE
House Bill 503
Housing for Jobs Act**

**House Environment and Transportation Committee
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Government Relations**

The Maryland State Education Association supports House Bill 503, which would help support affordable housing development in Maryland.

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 over 40 local affiliates in every county across the state of Maryland, and our parent affiliate is the 3 million-member National Education Association (NEA).

The shortage of affordable housing is pushing more students and families into homelessness and making it impossible for educators to live in the communities where they work. Where affordable housing is in short supply, educators are in short supply. Students and their families struggle to find decent places to live. The affordable housing crisis is exacerbating the national educator shortage and putting more students at risk of losing their homes.

Last year, through the Joint Chairman's Report, the General Assembly required the Maryland State Department of Education to survey education support staff about pay equity and personal finances. The results tell a story: these educators are having a hard time making ends meet.

- 62% of ESPs make \$42,270 or less (not including IT staff). According to the MIT wage calculator, a living wage in Maryland is \$51,460.
 - *Note: Inflation has increased 32% during the last 10 years.*
- Nearly 80% of ESPs say they need a second job to make ends meet



Educators know that housing policy is education policy. When a student does not have housing security, they won't be able to learn. Students should be able to fully engage in school without thinking about where they'll be sleeping at night. We appreciate how this bill tries to strike a balance between building affordable housing and not overcrowding our schools. We look forward to continue working with the General Assembly and the Department of Housing and Community Development on this issue.

MSEA urges a Favorable Report on House Bill 503.