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**TESTIMONY ON HB#/0064- POSITION: FAVORABLE**

**Task Force on Education Funding and Student Population Growth**

**TO:** Chair Barnes, Vice Chair Kaiser, and members of the Appropriations Committee

**FROM:** Richard Keith Kaplowitz

**My name is Richard Keith Kaplowitz. I am a resident of District 3, Frederick County. I am submitting this testimony in support of HB#/0064, Task Force on Education Funding and Student Population Growth**

Data from the Maryland Association of Counties report “**Why Does the State’s School Enrollment Count Matter?**”<sup>1</sup> and the high growth rates some counties like Frederick are undergoing means the formula for calculating student population and funding for those students lags a year behind the actual uncompensated growth in student populations.

The intent of this bill is to establish a Task Force on Education Funding and Student Population Growth to analyze the challenges related to the delay in student enrollment counts and its effect on school funding and the connection between growing student populations and the provision of school funding. The report from the Task Force with its findings and recommendations would be due to the Governor and the General Assembly by December 15, 2025.

FCPS is currently the fastest growing public school system in Maryland. FCPS enrollment has increased by nearly 10% over the past 5 years, while 18 other school systems saw decreases during the same period. The total number of students is anticipated to increase by 5,990 students between 2022 and 2032. Between 2020 and 2024 the population of Frederick County grew by 9.7%.<sup>2</sup> . The State Board of Education has acknowledged this growth in student populations in Frederick County. It is clear the state strategic plan for school funding needs to adjust to consider the student population growth and this task force will assist in modification to the plan to adjust to real world conditions.<sup>3</sup>

**I respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable report on HB#/0064.**

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<sup>1</sup> <https://conduitstreet.mdcounties.org/2022/10/06/whats-up-with-the-states-school-enrollment-count-and-why-does-it-matter/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://worldpopulationreview.com/us-counties/maryland/fastest-growing>

<sup>3</sup> <https://strategicplan.marylandpublicschools.org/maryland-at-a-glance/>