



AFT 340 AFL-CIO
Seton Business Park
5800 Metro Drive, 2nd Floor
Baltimore, MD 21215-3209

**House Bill 1078 – Economic Development - Maryland Stadium Authority - Carroll Park Soccer Stadium and Facility
Appropriations Committee
March 3, 2026, 1pm**

UNFAVORABLE

The BTU proudly represents thousands of educators, school support staff, and education professionals working in Baltimore City public schools.

We respectfully urge an unfavorable report on HB1078, which would redirect funding from the Blueprint for Maryland's Future to cover principal and interest payments on bonds issued for a minor league soccer stadium. The Blueprint represents a once-in-a-generation commitment to educational equity in our state. It was intentionally designed to address historic and systemic underfunding, particularly in districts serving high concentrations of poverty. Baltimore City is the single largest beneficiary of concentration of poverty funding under the Blueprint because our students face some of the highest levels of economic hardship in Maryland.

These dollars are not surplus funds. They are not flexible reserves. They are targeted investments meant to provide wraparound services, expanded mental health supports, community school coordinators, academic interventions, and smaller class sizes for students who need them most. They are lifelines.

Redirecting Blueprint funding to finance a stadium bond fundamentally undermines the purpose of the law. The concentration of poverty dollars were enacted to break cycles of generational poverty by investing directly in children — not to subsidize private development projects, no matter how well-intentioned or popular.

Educators see every day what these funds are up against: students experiencing housing instability, food insecurity, untreated trauma, and unmet special education needs. The Blueprint was crafted as a systemic response to those realities. To divert these resources now sends a troubling message that our long-term commitment to children's futures is negotiable. We recognize the potential economic and community value of sports and development projects. But public education funding — especially funding specifically allocated to support low-income children — should not be the financing mechanism for those initiatives. The State made a clear promise when it passed the Blueprint: that we would prioritize students furthest from opportunity and invest in their success.

This bill breaks that promise.

Baltimore City students already face structural barriers that their peers in more affluent jurisdictions do not. The concentration of poverty formula acknowledges this reality and attempts to level the playing field. Redirecting those dollars not only weakens the integrity of the Blueprint framework, it risks widening disparities the law was designed to close. If we are serious about protecting our children's future, we must protect the funding that makes their success possible.

For these reasons, the Baltimore Teachers Union respectfully requests an unfavorable report on HB1078.