

To the Appropriations Committee:

My name is Grace Smith. I am a public school teacher and member of the MSRPS. I am directly impacted by this bill, because I pay 7% of every paycheck to the pension fund. I urge the committee to vote in favor of HB 1455.

Israel has targeted schools and universities throughout its genocidal war, a strategy which the US is now replicating in Iran. According to UNICEF, “More than 97 percent of schools have been damaged or destroyed, and 91.8 percent of all education facilities will require either full reconstruction or major rehabilitation to become functional again. Most of the 658,000 school age children have had limited access to face-to-face learning for over two academic years.” That could be my school. Those could be my students.

I did not become a teacher to have my hard-earned money used to fund a genocide. Surely the MSRPS can make a more ethical decision.

I hope that Maryland will continue its history of divesting from countries committing genocide and apartheid. Please vote for HB 1455.

Grace Smith

Works Cited:

After Two Years of War: Gaza’s Education System on the Brink of Collapse | Unicef State of Palestine, www.unicef.org/sop/stories/after-two-years-war-gazas-education-system-brink-collapse. Accessed 17 Mar. 2026.