



**Testimony of the Mayor and Council of Rockville**  
**SB 31 – School Construction and Housing – School Zones and Adequate Public**  
**Facilities Ordinances**  
**SUPPORT**

The Mayor and Council of Rockville are thankful to Chair Barnes and the members of the House Appropriations Committee for the opportunity to submit written comments in support of SB 31, as amended. The City of Rockville is thankful to Senator Lam for sponsoring this legislation and to Senator Kagan for her work to amend SB 31.

While the bill primarily impacts Counties, the Mayor and Council support SB 31, as amended, which would require County Boards of Education in their annual student residency and school zones report to the Maryland Department of Planning and the Interagency Commission on School Construction to consult with each municipality located in the County that exercises planning and zoning authority, and incorporate data provided by the municipalities into the plan’s enrollment projections and analysis of future facility needs.

This language is critical for municipalities, such as Rockville, that are directly impacted by school boundary decisions made by the County Board of Education. On March 26, the Montgomery County Board of Education dealt a devastating setback to our community by voting to approve boundary lines that would permanently move Rockville’s Wootton High School into the upcoming Crown High School that will open for the 2027-2028 school year. Wootton High School will be used as a holding facility for schools under major renovation/construction. The Mayor and Council, and the community, advocated strongly against the closing of Wootton High School. The school is the heart of the surrounding community. It is a thriving hub of educational and community programming, and is walkable for many of its students. Had there been a requirement in State law for the school system to adequately incorporate data provided by the City, the outcome may have been different.

During the Board of Education’s March 3 work session, Montgomery County Public Schools staff confirmed that enrollment projections rely exclusively on site-plan-approved development and further explained that approved development and adopted planning documents “are not directly accounted for in our projections.” This methodology raises significant concerns for jurisdictions like Rockville, where substantial residential growth has been planned and adopted through approved development and master plans, but may not yet have reached and passed final site-plan approval.

Major structural decisions (such as closing, relocating, or redefining the service area of a high school) should be based on projections that fully reflect the communities our schools are intended to serve and should have a deeper level of review of the cluster planning considerations and municipal growth trajectory. We shared this information with the Board of Education and requested that when determining enrollment projections, the Board incorporate growth reflected in all approved development (not just sitemap approval) and adopted planning documents, and coordinate closely with local jurisdictions to

ensure that school planning aligns with long-term land use planning. The City also requested that the school system include Rockville's 20240 Comprehensive Plan and Rockville's Town Center Master Plan in the Superintendent's FY27 Recommended Capital Budget and the FY27-32 Capital Improvements Program.

In January of 2026, the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development published its 2030 Housing Production Target report, establishing annual benchmarks for jurisdictions under Governor Moore's Housing Starts Here Executive Order. Rockville's specific target is 2,266. We are committed to doing our part to alleviate the housing shortage in Rockville, and we are proactively working with stakeholders to meet and exceed this goal.

SB 31, as amended, takes an important step forward by requiring the sharing of municipal data in school system enrollment projections and analysis of future needs. The measure supports enhanced collaboration between municipalities and local school boards, providing school systems with accurate data to support strategic decision-making on school planning issues. These safeguards are needed to protect school communities in Rockville and across Maryland. For these reasons, we urge the Committee to provide SB 31, as amended, with a favorable report.