

Testimony on SB0031: School Construction and Housing

Position: FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS

Committee: House Appropriations

Date: Wednesday, April 8, 2026

The Statement:

"Good afternoon, Chair and members of the Committee. My name is Nicole McDonald. I'm a mom from Baltimore. I am **Favorable with Amendments** on SB0031 because we need to stop the games and start being honest about our schools.

You are asking for another report on school zones and housing capacity, but as a parent, I already see where the money is going, and it isn't to our kids. While you're studying 'capacity,' here is what we actually see being built:

1. **Luxury Towers over Classrooms:** We see **\$900 million** going into luxury apartments and towers at Harborplace.
2. **Suburban Bias:** We see **hundreds of millions** going into brand-new replacement high schools in the suburbs, like Dulaney and Towson High, while our city kids are told to wait for a 'report.'
3. **Infrastructure over Education:** We see millions poured into bridge replacements and express toll lanes. The state never has a 'capacity' problem when it's time to pour concrete for a road, but suddenly the money disappears when it's time to put a seat in a classroom.

My question to this committee is: Who are you building for? Because it is clearly not for the kids in our neighborhoods who are sitting in overcrowded classrooms right now.

This is just another example of certain areas and certain projects being funded while the rest of the community goes unheard, unnoticed, and left at the wayside. Maryland needs to stop acting like kids are the priority when every bill you pass goes against them. You have the money to put a seat in a classroom for every child in Baltimore—you just choose to spend it on developers instead. Stop using these 'capacity reports' to stall. If you have the money for stadiums and luxury towers, you have the money for our children.

Thank you.