

## Testimony on HB1329 – FAVORABLE

### Education - Public School Construction - Funding

#### House Appropriations Committee – March 11, 2026

Appropriations Committee and Members of the Maryland General Assembly,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit **FAVORABLE testimony in support of HB1329.**

As a longtime parent leader in Prince George’s County – which faces a now-estimated \$20 billion backlog in school construction and maintenance – I’ve helped lead coalitions of other parents to highlight the horrifying conditions ([raw sewage in classrooms](#), [black mold and asbestos](#), [students learning in animal-infested trailers](#)) in some of our oldest school buildings. I’ll never forget one former PTA president sharing the example of a child who came home from school telling the story of holes in the floor of their classroom trailer: “Don’t worry. Kids only fall in *sometimes*.”

But school construction and the urgent need to address it is not a Prince George’s-only issue. Every Maryland student – in every county – deserves the right to learn in modernized and safe school buildings, and LEAs across the state are facing an overwhelming number of 50-plus-year-old buildings to address. **HB1329 – which increases the annual public school construction funding goal to at least \$550 million - is an important *first* step.**

HB1329 alone will not solve all our school construction needs, and I emphasize that it does not replace the importance of Governor Moore and the General Assembly working collaboratively on a Built to Learn Act, Part 2 and creating new dedicated school construction funding streams next legislative session. But HB1329 and its Senate cross-file SB0934 are both worthy of strong support and the bipartisan nature of their sponsorships should be commended.

School construction is more than new physical buildings. It is also local economic investment. In Prince George’s County’s now-complete Phase One, this meant more than \$140 million and approximately 34% of contracts awarded to 101 minority businesses, and nearly \$70 million awarded to 38 county-based businesses. Our in-progress Phase Two program expanded those targets, while also setting a goal of hiring at least 40% local workers. Most importantly, between Phase One, Phase Two and several emergency rebuilds, we will have constructed new buildings for nearly 20 school communities. And school construction investment also brings progress in other areas, such as the Maryland Interagency Commission on School Construction requiring LEAs to submit a pedestrian safety plan for projects increasing capacity by over 100 students, per the 2022 Safe Walk to School Act.

I see the impact of these new schools and disparities between buildings firsthand, with my eldest child now attending a nearly new Phase One middle school while my 10-year-old learns in a 49-year-old building that is nowhere near any future construction cycle because of the overwhelming construction and maintenance backlog our school system faces. I testify today to make sure every other student in Maryland has that same equal opportunity as my middle schooler.

Students and educators across Maryland deserve to learn and teach in world-class facilities, and HB1329 will help provide much-needed funding to make that a reality. I respectfully urge a FAVORABLE report on HB1329.

Timothy Meyer

*Former 5-term PTO president at Mount Rainier Elementary, Prince George’s County*

*Individual Advocate with the Blueprint Coalition*