

**SB0031 - House\_FAV\_City of Rockville\_School Constr**

Uploaded by: Christine Krone

Position: FAV



**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.

# **SB0031 crossfiled bill - FAV - School Construction**

Uploaded by: Richard KAP Kaplowitz

Position: FAV

SB0031\_Crossfiled Bill\_RichardKaplowitz\_FAV  
04/08/2026

Richard Keith Kaplowitz  
Frederick, MD 21703

**TESTIMONY ON CROSSFILED BILL SB#0031- POSITION: FAVORABLE**

**School Construction and Housing – School Zones and Adequate Public Facilities Ordinances**

**TO:** Chair Barnes, Vice Chair Kaiser, and members of the Appropriations Committee

**FROM:** Richard Keith Kaplowitz

My name is Richard Keith Kaplowitz. I am a resident of District 3, Frederick County. I am submitting this testimony in support of cross-filed bill SB#0031, **School Construction and Housing – School Zones and Adequate Public Facilities Ordinances**

I submitted testimony on the cross-filed bill version heard in your chamber. That was bill HB0337 which was heard in committee on 02/17 but did not move forward. This is the crossover bill from the other chamber SB0031. I urge you to support this bill which passed the Senate with amendments by the vote of 33-12. Please reconcile these bills and pass them in both chambers after a favorable vote in your committee.

**I respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable report on cross-filed bill SB#0031.**

**sb0031.pdf**

Uploaded by: Nicole Mcdonald

Position: FWA

## 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.

# **SB 0031\_HB 337\_ School Construction and Housing -**

Uploaded by: Trudy Tibbals

Position: UNF

**SB 0031/HB 337:** School Construction and Housing - School Zones and Adequate Public Facilities Ordinances: Please vote to **OPPOSE** this bill.

Dear Appropriations Committee:

I am writing as a concerned resident of Maryland to strongly oppose **SB 0031/HB 337**.

Maryland already faces serious challenges with overcrowded schools, strained infrastructure, and rapidly growing housing developments in many counties. Adequate Public Facilities Ordinances exist precisely to ensure that new development does not overwhelm schools, roads, and other public services before they are ready. This bill weakens those important local safeguards by prioritizing faster housing approvals over student needs and community planning.

My main concerns include:

- It reduces local control and forces counties to approve developments even when schools are severely over capacity.
- It places additional administrative burdens on school systems through new mandatory reporting requirements while simultaneously limiting their ability to manage growth.
- It will worsen classroom overcrowding, longer bus routes, and declining educational quality for children across Maryland.
- School capacity should be a legitimate factor in development decisions, not an inconvenience that state law sidelines.

Responsible growth means building schools **before** or, at least, **alongside** new housing — not forcing existing schools and taxpayers to absorb the costs of unplanned expansion. Maryland families and students deserve strong protections for school capacity, not legislation that makes overcrowding easier to ignore.

I respectfully urge you to **oppose SB 0031/HB 337** and vote against its passage.

Thank you for your time and thoughtful consideration of my concerns regarding this important educational facilities planning legislation.

Sincerely,

Trudy Tibbals

