

# **SB 934 Letter of Support\_Testimony.pdf**

Uploaded by: Alex Donahue

Position: FAV



## **Letter of Support for SB 934/HB 1329 – Education - Public School Construction - Funding – March 11, 2026**

**Senator Guy Guzzone**  
**Chair, Senate Budget & Taxation Committee**  
**3 West Miller Senate Office Building**  
**Annapolis, Maryland 21401**

**Delegate Ben Barnes**  
**Chair, House Appropriations Committee**  
**121 Taylor House Office Building**  
**Annapolis, Maryland 21401**

**Senator Guzzone and Delegate Barnes,**

The IAC appreciates the opportunity to provide a Letter of Support for SB 934/HB 1329.

### **Outline of Benefits**

Maryland’s portfolio of public school facilities is currently experiencing significant problems with reliability resulting in more frequent and higher-cost preventive and ongoing maintenance projects. Since 2005, the average age of public PreK-12 school facilities has increased to 32 years from 24 years. With the exception of 2025, the IAC has observed a steady increase in the average Facility Condition Index (FCI) score—which is a measure of how depleted the condition of a facility is—of the school facilities in Maryland, with the baseline average for all LEAs in 2020 being 49.95%, and the 2025 average FCI across all jurisdictions being 52.26%. These parallel declines show that capital spending levels have been insufficient to counteract the natural aging and wear and tear on school facilities and to maintain their condition at levels that support teaching and learning..

Presently, the IAC estimates the minimum amount of State funding needed to support on-schedule execution of the top-priority school-construction projects in Maryland is \$622 million in FY 2027. This exceeds the present legislative target for appropriations of \$450 million and Governor’s proposed budget for school construction by about \$170 million.

For FY 2027, the IAC received requests for funding from LEAs totaling \$754 million, consisting of funding requests for 144 projects. At estimated funding levels, the IAC anticipates only being able to fund 104 of those projects in FY 2027. Should the legislation pass and the IAC’s capital budget for FY 2027 be increased by \$100 million, the IAC could fully fund 59% of the currently unfunded top-priority projects, including six key projects in low-wealth small counties and three in medium-sized counties.

Making these additional awards to at least ten projects in FY 2027 would have four valuable effects. First, it would avoid forcing counties to “forward-fund” \$100 million worth of State share by borrowing the funds (or deferring other project investments) needed to keep design and construction of these projects on schedule. Second, it would free up the State AND local capital funds needed for the next urgent backlogged projects in the queue to start when needed rather than being deferred if local fiscal capacity is insufficient. Third, it would save a projected \$4 million in State purchasing power that will otherwise be lost to construction-cost inflation



affecting those projects that are postponed. And, fourth, because executing the next urgent backlogged projects a year earlier will reduce the cost of those projects by about 4% and potentially avoid requiring LEAs to make costly temporary fixes to failing building systems while waiting for the capital funding to arrive, the funding will obtain another estimated \$4 million to \$6 million in savings to the State.

### **IAC Operational Impact**

The IAC anticipates no operational impact as a result of the proposed legislation. As mentioned above, IAC staff have already reviewed the \$754 million worth of submitted CIP projects and determined their eligibility to be well above \$622 million. Without any significant additional effort, IAC staff could award an additional \$100 million in appropriated funding in FY 2027 to eligible projects from the submitted set. Because the IAC generally only awards funds that are likely to be spent in the fiscal year in which they are awarded, the additional \$100 million should result in payments to contractors or reimbursements to LEAs during FY 2027.

### **Conclusion**

While SB 934/HB 1329 comes with a price tag, it will obtain a set of fiscal benefits that quantitatively exceed that price tag by an estimated 8-10% as well as unquantifiable but meaningful direct benefits to students, staff, and communities. Even if the additional \$100 million proposed in SB 934/HB 1329 were to be obtained by bonding a greater amount in FY 2027 and reducing the FY 2028 bonded amount by the equivalent, the value of completing the projects sooner produces such meaningful net benefits that having the funding earlier would be valuable and welcomed by LEAs and the IAC.

Regards,

Alex Donahue  
Executive Director

**SB934 - Free State PTA - favorable.pdf**

Uploaded by: Beth Jarrett

Position: FAV



**Testimony in Support of SB934**  
**Education – Public School Construction – Funding**  
*Budget and Taxation*  
March 11, 2026  
**FAVORABLE**

Free State PTA (FSPTA) represents over 70,000 volunteer members and families in over 500 public schools. As the state’s premier and largest child advocacy organization, Free State PTA is a powerful voice for all children, a relevant resource for families, schools and communities, and a strong advocate for public education. ***We are offering a favorable testimony in support of Senate Bill 934.***

The condition and capacity of public school facilities are fundamental to the quality of education that Maryland students receive. Senate Bill 934 responsibly updates the State’s funding goal for school construction by increasing the annual target from \$450 million to \$550 million beginning in fiscal year 2027. Maryland’s student population continues to grow in many jurisdictions, and many existing school buildings require modernization to meet current safety, accessibility, and educational standards. By establishing a higher annual goal within existing debt affordability guidelines, this legislation helps ensure that the Capital Improvement Program can continue to support a stable pipeline of school construction and renovation projects across the state.

Consistently we hear from PTA’s across Maryland that many children are currently learning in school buildings that are decades old and in desperate need of repair, renovation, or replacement. Aging HVAC systems, outdated classrooms, and deteriorating infrastructure can negatively affect student health, comfort, and learning conditions. Codifying this funding intent in statute provides greater predictability for local school systems as they plan long-term facility investments. Reliable state participation allows districts to address overcrowding, replace aging infrastructure, and create modern learning environments that support today’s instructional needs. Importantly, the bill clarifies that this annual goal does not include funding from the Built to Learn program, ensuring transparency and protecting the baseline commitment to school construction. For these reasons, House Bill 1329 represents a prudent investment in Maryland’s students, educators, and communities, and it merits favorable consideration.

Free State PTA urges the committee to issue a favorable report on SB934.

Thank you,  
Free State PTA, Advocacy Committee

**2026.03.11 IAC LOS.pdf**

Uploaded by: Christiana Rigby

Position: FAV



# Howard County Council

George Howard Building  
3430 Court House Drive  
Ellicott City, Maryland 21043-4392

Christiana Rigby  
Councilmember

---

District 3

## TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB934

### Education - Public School Construction – Funding

March 11, 2026

Dear Chair Guzzone, Vice Chair Rosapepe, and Members of the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee:

As the Councilmember representing District 3 on the Howard County Council, I am writing to express my support for SB934, Senator Corderman's legislation, to increase the annual public school construction funding for the Maryland Interagency Commission on School Construction (IAC). This legislation takes an important step toward strengthening Maryland's commitment to modern, safe, and effective learning environments by establishing a higher and more predictable annual funding goal for public school construction.

Stable and adequate investment in school facilities is critical for Maryland counties, including Howard County. The Howard County Public School System consistently ranks among the best in the nation but maintaining that standard requires sustained investment in the buildings. Comptroller Lierman's School Construction Report from September of 2025 found that 80 percent of schools need repair, renovation, or replacement to be considered satisfactory. Counties need strong state partnership and funding to effectively address this challenge. Ensuring reliable state funding helps local jurisdictions plan responsibly for the construction and renovation projects necessary to meet current and future demand.

Investments in school construction support the modernization of existing facilities so that they meet today's educational, technological, and environmental standards. Updated buildings improve the learning environment for students, enhance safety and accessibility, and support teachers and staff in delivering high-quality instruction. In addition, school buildings now must be updated to meet the requirements for pre-Kindergarten. Schools also serve as critical community assets, hosting recreation programs, and civic events, and maintaining them strengthens the broader community.

I respectfully urge the Committee to give SB 934 a favorable report. Strengthening the State's commitment to school construction funding will help ensure that counties like Howard County can continue providing high-quality educational facilities that meet the needs of current and future generations of students.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Yours in service,

Christiana Rigby

(410) 313-2001

fax: (410) 313-3297

<http://cc.howardcountymd.gov>

# **Testimony SB 934 - Education - Public School Const**

Uploaded by: Dawana Sterrette

Position: FAV

**Testimony of the  
Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners  
In Support of Senate Bill 934 –  
Education – Public School Construction – Funding**

**March 11, 2026**

The Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners supports Senate Bill 934 as a step toward providing adequate school construction funding to public schools in the State.

The legislation would require that, beginning in FY 2027 that the State provide at least \$550,000,000 each year for public school construction and makes it clear that funding provided through the Built to Learn Program is in addition to the \$550,000,000 in this legislation.

Baltimore City has the oldest building stock within the State. Even with the Built to Learn Program and the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Buildings Program, the City School building portfolio is in desperate need of additional funding. Additionally, the Interagency Commission on School Construction (IAC) has publicly stated through testimony before the General Assembly that the current public school construction funding is not enough to adequately address the building conditions around the State. Despite the current school construction funding, public school buildings conditions around the State are getting more inadequate.

It is well-established that City Schools faces significant capital needs for the school system's buildings. In addition, City Schools is a district that is regularly closing and merging schools, as well as returning buildings via surplus to the City of Baltimore, because of the inability to adequately support facility needs. City Schools estimates that more than \$3.86 billion (in today's dollars) is needed to bring all City Schools school buildings up to minimally acceptable standards through repairs and replacements to the remaining facilities that are still in need of a complete overhaul due to their age and conditions, even after the 21st Century School Buildings Program and the Built to Learn Act of 2020 have been fully implemented.

With the 21<sup>st</sup> Century School Buildings Program, the school board pays approximately \$20 million dollars, per year, in bond payments in order to support the construction of those newly renovated buildings; \$20 million that could have been used for instruction, interventions and other school related teaching expenses.

Also, given current inflationary pressures on construction costs, there is ample evidence that facility issues within City Schools is even more concerning and the \$3.86 billion significantly underestimates the full costs of addressing these unmet systemic facility renovation needs, and

that even more funding would be required to complete a full portfolio replacement to the educational standards recommended by the IAC, and utilized by other school districts in Maryland and across the nation.

For the foregoing reasons, the Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners urges a favorable report.

Dawana Merritt Sterrette, Esq.  
Executive Director, Legislative and Government Affairs  
Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners  
443-250-0190

**SB934 SUPPORT.pdf**

Uploaded by: Grace Wilson

Position: FAV



## **SB0934 – EDUCATION – PUBLIC SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION – FUNDING**

March 11, 2026

BUDGET AND TAXATION

### **SUPPORT**

Grace Wilson, Director of Legislation & Policy (410.440.1758)

---

Anne Arundel County Public Schools (AACPS) supports **SB0934 - Education - Public School Construction - Funding**. This bill establishes that the intent of the Maryland General Assembly is to provide at least \$550 million for public school construction annually beginning in fiscal year 2027.

AACPS endeavors to provide students with high performing school facilities conducive to learning. The Board of Education of Anne Arundel County strongly supports adequate funding and the development of adequate and equitable State and federal programs to assist localities with public school construction.

In 2018, the Maryland General Assembly passed the 21<sup>st</sup> Century School Facilities Act, which made comprehensive changes to school construction funding and approval processes, including altering the role of the Interagency Commission on School Construction and establishing an annual goal to allocate at least \$400 million for public school construction and renovations projects to build, renovate, and improve public schools so as to provide high quality learning environments for students.

However, the increased State funding for public school facilities established by the 21<sup>st</sup> Century School Facilities Act has not kept pace with the capital needs of public schools, including the rising cost of construction. In fact, a September 2025 report from the Comptroller of Maryland revealed, "...a critical area of public education where the state has fallen behind is the physical condition of school buildings, despite increased state and county investment in recent years." The report concluded, "[f]or Maryland to maintain its position as a top-rated state for public school education and for the state to retain and attract middle class families that value affordability and quality public schools, the state and [local education agencies] must improve the physical conditions of schools. While increased capital improvements can be addressed through cost cutting measures, the ultimate solution will rely on statewide reimagining of funding formulas and revenue streams."

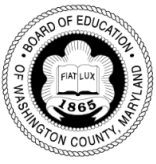
AACPS appreciates the intent of this legislation to increase the annual State appropriation for public school construction to ensure sufficient funding for public school construction and that local education agencies have the necessary resources to provide students with higher performing facilities conducive to learning.

Accordingly, AACPS respectfully requests a **FAVORABLE** committee report on SB0934.

**SB 934 FAVORABLE WashCoBdEducation 3-11-26.pdf**

Uploaded by: Jamie Brown

Position: FAV



**BILL:** Senate Bill 934  
**TITLE:** Education – Public School Construction - Funding  
**HEARING DATE:** March 11, 2026  
**POSITION:** FAVORABLE  
**COMMITTEE:** Budget and Taxation Committee  
**CONTACT:** Ms. Jamie Brown, Paralegal & Legislative Representative, 301-766-2946

The Washington County Board of Education supports Senate Bill 934, which would establish in state law a minimum annual public school construction funding level of \$550 million beginning in Fiscal Year 2027.

Washington County Public Schools has forty-seven (47) school facilities to serve the needs of approximately 22,000 students. The need for new school construction and the repair and modernization of aging facilities is particularly acute in Washington County, as many of these buildings are ageing and in need of significant repair or replacement to provide safe, secure, and high-quality learning environments.

Over half of Washington County's public schools and instructional building inventory were constructed in the 1970's or earlier and have not had the benefit of a full renovation or modernization since that time. These buildings are in need of replacement or modernization both from the standpoint of failing, inefficient systems due to age, and to keep pace with current educational standards through the elimination of "open" schools designed around education philosophies of the era in which they were constructed.

Within the Washington County Board of Education's educational facilities 10-year plan are recommendations for five (5) major capital projects to address facility replacement and student seat capacity needs, and eleven (11) capital maintenance projects that address deferred maintenance and life cycle replacement of various building systems.

Washington County recognizes that it is not alone in needing to provide significant repairs to schools or to replace them. With limited school construction funding available, many school systems across the state are experiencing similar challenges. Increasing the public school construction funding amount by \$100 million acknowledges this widespread need and reflects the impact that recent inflation has had on public school construction costs.

The Board of Education of Washington County strongly supports increasing state funding for public school construction to improve school facilities to enhance the learning environment for thousands of students across the State of Maryland.

*Washington County Board of Education supports Senate Bill 934 and requests the Budget and Taxation Committee to issue a favorable report.*

Thank you.

Cc: Washington County Board of Education Members  
Washington County Delegation to the Maryland General Assembly  
Dr. David T. Sovine, Superintendent  
Dr. Gary Willow, Deputy Superintendent  
Mr. Jeffrey Proulx, Chief Operating Officer

**SB 934 FAV FCG OCE LS26.pdf**

Uploaded by: Jessica Fitzwater

Position: FAV



**FREDERICK COUNTY GOVERNMENT**  
**OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE**

Jessica Fitzwater  
County Executive

**SB 934 – Education - Public School Construction - Funding**


**DATE:** March 11, 2026  
**COMMITTEE:** Senate Budget and Taxation Committee  
**POSITION:** Favorable  
**FROM:** The Office of Frederick County Executive Jessica Fitzwater

As the County Executive of Frederick County, I urge the committee to give **SB 934 – Education - Public School Construction – Funding** a favorable report. This legislation would increase the amount of funding the State must provide for school construction from \$450,000,000 to \$550,000,000 beginning in FY27.

As you may know, Frederick County is the fastest-growing jurisdiction in Maryland, and that trend is particularly apparent in our public-school enrollment. While this growth is a great endorsement of Frederick County and FCPS, a lack of adequate state school construction funding to keep up with capacity and infrastructure needs brings challenges to our County and school system. Frederick County is proud to consistently forward fund our school construction projects, however, the County budget and bonding capacity is limited. Without additional State funding, Frederick County cannot meet the capacity needs of our school system.

SB 934 would assist in ensuring that growing counties in Maryland are receiving adequate funding to maintain and renovate our aging schools and construct new school facilities to keep up with our increasing enrollment.

Thank you for your consideration of SB 934 and I urge a favorable report.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Jessica Fitzwater, County Executive  
Frederick County, MD

# **SB 934 - Public School Construction - Funding PSSA**

Uploaded by: Mary Pat Fannon

Position: FAV



Mary Pat Fannon, Executive Director  
1217 S. Potomac Street  
Baltimore, MD 21224  
410-935-7281  
marypat.fannon@pssam.org

---

BILL: SB 934  
TITLE: Public School Construction - Funding  
DATE: March 11, 2026  
POSITION: Favorable  
COMMITTEE: Senate Budget and Taxation Committee  
CONTACT: Mary Pat Fannon, Executive Director, PSSAM

---

The Public School Superintendents' Association of Maryland (PSSAM), on behalf of all twenty-four local school superintendents, **supports** Senate Bill 934.

This bill states that it is the intent of the General Assembly that at least \$550 million is included in the annual State budget for public school construction beginning in fiscal year 2027.

***Students learn best in schools that are safe, healthy, and designed for modern educational needs.*** Today's schools must support heightened safety expectations, including secure entrances, clear sight lines, modern communication systems, and full ADA accessibility. At the same time, building conditions directly affect student health and learning. Outdated ventilation, heating, and cooling systems contribute to poor air quality, increased asthma rates, absenteeism, and difficulty concentrating. Aging facilities also struggle to support modern technology and may even face heat-related closures during extreme weather. Maryland's commitment to climate solutions also requires school facilities to meet higher environmental standards. While these improvements create long-term energy savings, they often increase upfront construction costs. In short, unsafe or outdated school buildings directly undermine student success.

***Maryland's funding for school construction through the State Capital Improvement Program (CIP) has remained largely stagnant in recent years and does not include an inflationary adjustment.*** At the same time, every local school system faces significant unmet capital needs while construction costs continue to rise rapidly. Inflation in labor, materials, and supply chains has dramatically reduced purchasing power for school construction projects. As a result, projects are becoming more expensive and in some cases must be scaled back or delayed because available funding cannot meet the original scope.

Construction inflation has been particularly severe. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics *Producer Price Index* for New School Building Construction, costs rose from 157.5 in January 2018 to 224.7 in January 2024—**an increase of 42.7% in just six years**. The increase over a longer time horizon is even more striking. **In 2003, the State cost per square foot for school construction was \$139; in 2026, it is \$431**. Without adjustments to state funding levels, these rising costs continue to erode the ability of school systems to build and modernize facilities.

***Maryland’s school infrastructure faces a substantial backlog of aging and unreliable facilities.*** According to the Interagency Commission on School Construction (IAC):

- 46% (627 facilities) are considered unreliable and in need of major repair, and
- 34% (463 facilities) are rated as “OK” but occasionally unreliable.

Delaying construction only makes the problem more expensive. Temporary repairs and emergency fixes often create a costly “band-aid” approach that does not address underlying structural issues. As projects are postponed, inflation continues to drive costs even higher.

***Investment in school construction also benefits Maryland’s economy.*** High-quality school facilities help attract families, employers, and a talented workforce. School construction funding generates a ripple effect across the economy by supporting skilled trades and construction jobs; architects, engineers, and designers; manufacturing and material suppliers, and local small businesses. These investments strengthen both local communities and the statewide economy.

***The success of the Blueprint for Maryland’s Future depends on having facilities that can support its programs.*** This includes safe and healthy **community schools**, high-quality **prekindergarten classrooms**, modern **career and technical education labs**, and expanded and mission-critical **special education spaces**. If Maryland is serious about educational equity, students across the state must have access to comparable learning environments.

Local governments have increasingly shouldered the burden of school construction costs, but ***many counties—especially lower-wealth jurisdictions—cannot meet facility needs without strong state partnership.*** Even when local governments attempt to advance funding for projects, it can take decades to recover those investments. In some cases, counties simply do not have the fiscal capacity to move projects forward without additional state support.

Historic cost escalation and ongoing inflationary pressures are making it increasingly difficult for school systems to address facility needs. Ensuring safe, modern schools will require a renewed commitment and increased funding commitment from the State to partner with local governments and provide funding that reflects today’s construction realities.

For these reasons, PSSAM **supports** Senate Bill 934 and requests a **favorable** report.

# **SB 934 Testimony.pdf**

Uploaded by: Paul Corderman

Position: FAV

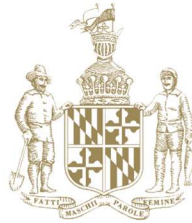
**PAUL D. CORDERMAN**  
*Legislative District 2*  
Frederick and Washington Counties

Budget and Taxation Committee

*Subcommittees*

Capital Budget

Education, Business and Administration



James Senate Office Building  
11 Bladen Street, Room 403  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
410-841-3903 • 301-858-3903  
800-492-7122 Ext. 3903  
Paul.Corderman@senate.state.md.us

**THE SENATE OF MARYLAND**  
**ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401**

March 11, 2026

Senate Budget & Tax Committee  
Chair Guy Guzzone  
Vice Chair Jim Rosapepe  
3 West Miller Senate Office Building  
Annapolis, MD 21401

**Testimony In Support of SB 934 - Education - Public School Construction - Funding**

Chair Guzzone, Vice Chair Rosapepe, and Members of the Budget & Tax Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to present Senate Bill 934. SB 934 establishes a clear and responsible goal for maintaining consistent investment in Maryland's public school facilities. SB 934 will raise the funding goal to at least \$550 million annually for school construction beginning in fiscal year 2027. By raising the goal, SB 934 helps to ensure that the state can maintain a stable pipeline of projects through the Capital Improvement Program. Predictable funding allows school systems to plan effectively, address aging infrastructure, and ensures that students and educators have safe spaces that support learning.

Investing consistently in school construction is an investment in students, communities, and the long-term strength of Maryland's public education system. SB 934 recognizes the growing needs of school districts while remaining mindful of the state's debt affordability guidelines. By setting a clear funding goal and reaffirming the state's commitment to school facilities, Senate Bill 934 helps provide the stability and foresight needed to meet Maryland's educational and infrastructure needs.

Thank you for your consideration of this bill, and we respectfully request a favorable report on SB 934.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "P. D. Corderman".

Senator Paul D. Corderman – District 2, Washington & Frederick Counties

# **Testimony in support of SB0934 - Education - Publi**

Uploaded by: Richard KAP Kaplowitz

Position: FAV

SB0934\_RichardKaplowitz\_FAV  
03/11/2026  
Richard Keith Kaplowitz  
Frederick. MD 21703-7134

**TESTIMONY ON SB#0934 - POSITION: FAVORABLE**  
**Education - Public School Construction - Funding**

**TO:** Chair Guzzone, Vice Chair Rosapepe, and members of the Budget & Taxation Committee  
**FROM:** Richard Keith Kaplowitz

My name is Richard Kaplowitz I am a resident of District 3, Frederick County. I am submitting this testimony in support of SB0934, **Education - Public School Construction – Funding**

Maryland Matters has reported on the Comptroller report that said *80% of public schools in need of 'repair, renovation or replacement'*<sup>1</sup>

Just 20% of the state's school buildings are in satisfactory shape or better, while the other 80% would need "repair, renovation or replacement" to get to that level, according to a report released Thursday.

The report from Comptroller Brooke Lierman said that the state needs to improve its school facilities if it wants to keep its reputation for top-ranked schools, but that doing so will require "a statewide reimagining of funding formulas and revenue streams."

In recognition of this crisis this bill is submitted to attempt to begin resolving the problem.

This bill will codify certain provisions of law that specify the intent of the General Assembly that the State provide at least a certain amount of funding for public school construction each year; and will increase the annual public school construction funding goal to \$550,000,000 beginning in fiscal year 2027.

**I respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable report on SB0934.**

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://marylandmatters.org/2025/09/19/comptroller-80-of-public-schools-in-need-of-repair-renovation-or-replacement/>

# **SB 934 - Support - School Construction Funding.pdf**

Uploaded by: Sam Mathias

Position: FAV

**BILL:** Senate Bill 934  
**TITLE:** Education - Public School Construction – Funding  
**HEARING DATE:** March 11, 2026  
**POSITION:** FAVORABLE  
**COMMITTEE:** Budget and Taxation  
**CONTACT:** Sam Mathias, Legal & Policy Director ([smathias@mabe.org](mailto:smathias@mabe.org))

The Maryland Association of Boards of Education (MABE), representing all the state’s local boards of education, **supports Senate Bill 934, Education - Public School Construction – Funding.**

This bill states that it is the intent of the General Assembly that at least \$550 million is included in the annual State budget for public school construction beginning in fiscal year 2027.

Students learn most effectively in school environments that are safe, healthy, and equipped to meet modern educational demands. Today’s facilities must address heightened safety expectations, including secure entrances, clear sight lines, reliable communication systems, and full compliance with ADA accessibility requirements. At the same time, the physical condition of school buildings has a direct impact on student health and learning. Outdated ventilation, heating, and cooling systems can lead to poor air quality, higher asthma rates, increased absenteeism, and greater difficulty concentrating. Older facilities also often lack the infrastructure needed to support modern technology and may be vulnerable to heat-related closures during periods of extreme weather. In addition, Maryland’s commitment to climate solutions requires school facilities to meet higher environmental performance standards. Although these upgrades can generate long-term energy savings, they frequently increase upfront construction costs. Ultimately, unsafe or outdated school buildings can significantly undermine student success.

Maryland’s funding for school construction through the State Capital Improvement Program (CIP) has remained largely stagnant in recent years and does not include an inflationary adjustment. At the same time, every local school system faces significant unmet capital needs while construction costs continue to rise rapidly. Inflation for labor, materials, and supply chains has dramatically reduced purchasing power for school construction projects. As a result, projects are becoming more expensive and, in some cases, must be scaled back or delayed because available funding cannot meet the original scope. Delay itself, of course, increases cost for projects further.

Construction inflation has been particularly severe. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Producer Price Index for New School Building Construction, costs rose from \$157.5 per square foot in January 2018 to \$224.7 per square foot in January 2024: an increase of 42.7% in just six years. The increase over a longer time horizon is even more

striking. In 2003, the State cost per square foot for school construction was \$139; in 2026, it is \$431. Without adjustments to state funding levels, these rising costs continue to erode the ability of school systems to build and modernize facilities.

Maryland's school infrastructure faces a substantial backlog of aging and unreliable facilities. According to the Interagency Commission on School Construction (IAC):

- 46% (627 facilities) are considered unreliable and in need of major repair, and
- 34% (463 facilities) are rated as "OK" but occasionally unreliable.

Delaying construction only makes the problem more expensive. Temporary repairs and emergency fixes often create a costly "band-aid" approach that does not address underlying structural issues. As projects are postponed, inflation continues to drive costs even higher.

Investment in school construction also benefits Maryland's economy. High-quality school facilities help attract families, employers, and a talented workforce. School construction funding generates a ripple effect across the economy by supporting skilled trades and construction jobs; architects, engineers, and designers; manufacturing and material suppliers, and local small businesses. These investments strengthen both local communities and the statewide economy.

The success of the Blueprint for Maryland's Future depends on school facilities that can support its programs. This includes safe and healthy community schools, high-quality prekindergarten classrooms, modern career and technical education labs, and expanded, mission-critical special education spaces. If Maryland is committed to advancing educational equity, students across the state must have access to comparable learning environments.

Local governments have increasingly borne the responsibility for school construction costs, but many counties—particularly lower-wealth jurisdictions—cannot meet their facility needs without a strong partnership with the State. Even when local governments move forward with funding projects, it can take decades to recover those investments. In some cases, counties simply lack the fiscal capacity to advance projects without additional state support. At the same time, historic cost escalation and persistent inflationary pressures are making it more difficult for school systems to address facility needs. Ensuring safe and modern schools will require renewed commitment from the State and increased funding to partner with local governments in a way that reflects today's construction costs.

**For these reasons, MABE supports Senate Bill 934 and requests a favorable report.**

**SB0934-BT\_MACo\_SUP.pdf**

Uploaded by: Sarah Sample

Position: FAV



## **Senate Bill 934**

### *Education - Public School Construction - Funding*

MACo Position: **SUPPORT**

To: Budget and Taxation Committee

Date: March 11, 2026

From: Sarah Sample

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **SUPPORTS** SB 934. This bill seeks to adjust the State's funding requirement for public school construction beginning in fiscal year 2027. It increases the annual minimum contribution for the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) by almost \$100M. While this would still be about \$75M less than what the Interagency Commission on School Construction (IAC) reports is needed immediately, it is an important step in the right direction for the State to catch up on vital school construction projects.

The cost of building and maintaining safe, modern schools has risen sharply as materials, labor, and inflation drive project budgets higher. Temporary programs like Built to Learn helped bridge gaps, but those funds are expiring while project backlogs grow. Counties face mounting pressure to get the existing inventory in good repair and take on significant renovations to implement capital mandates necessitated by the State's visionary education plan, the Blueprint for Maryland's Future (Blueprint).

While the State is statutorily required to be a funding partner to the counties in school maintenance and construction, the contributions have fallen short as needs continue to outpace available resources. Even projects that secure state approval often wait years for funding matches. The longer these plans sit in the pipeline, the more costly they become. A state-level investment that recognizes the needs and realities of Maryland schools now, will support learning for future generations in the years to come.

Maryland must renew its commitment to shared school construction funding and reestablish a balanced partnership with counties. The changes proposed by SB 934 can facilitate those goals. Accordingly, MACo urges a **FAVORABLE** report.

# **SB934 Timothy Meyer Favorable Testimony.pdf**

Uploaded by: Timothy Meyer

Position: FAV

## Testimony on SB934 – FAVORABLE

### Education - Public School Construction - Funding

#### Senate Budget and Taxation Committee – March 11, 2026

Budget and Taxation Committee and Members of the Maryland General Assembly,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit **FAVORABLE testimony in support of SB934.**

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. **SB934 – which increases the annual public school construction funding goal to at least \$550 million - is an important *first* step.**

SB934 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 SB934 and its House cross-file HB1329 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 SB934 will help provide much-needed funding to make that a reality. I respectfully urge a FAVORABLE report on SB934.

Timothy Meyer

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

*Individual Advocate with the Blueprint Coalition*

**SB 934\_HB 1329\_ Education - Public School Constr**

Uploaded by: Trudy Tibbals

Position: FAV

**SB 934/HB 1329:** Education - Public School Construction - Funding: Please vote to **SUPPORT** this bill.

Dear Budget & Taxation Committee and Appropriations Committee:

I am writing to respectfully **support SB 934/HB 1329**, concerning *Education – Public School Construction – Funding*.

**Safe, modern, and well-maintained school facilities are essential to providing students with a strong learning environment.** Across Maryland, many school buildings require significant upgrades, renovations, or replacement to meet the needs of growing student populations and evolving educational standards.

**SB 934/HB 1329 helps ensure that adequate resources are available for critical public school construction projects. Investing in school infrastructure supports student safety, improves learning conditions, and allows schools to provide the technology, classroom space, and specialized facilities needed for today’s educational programs.**

School construction funding also represents a long-term investment in Maryland’s communities. Well-designed and properly maintained school buildings support student success, strengthen neighborhoods, and **help attract families and businesses to the state.**

By prioritizing funding for school construction, Maryland can continue to provide students and educators with facilities that reflect the importance of education and the state’s commitment to future generations.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge you to **support SB 934 / HB 1329**.

Thank you for your time and thoughtful consideration.

Respectfully,

Trudy Tibbals

**\DBM LOC SB934\_HB1329 Education - Public School Co**

Uploaded by: Department of Budget and Management

Position: INFO



**Maryland**

DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET  
AND MANAGEMENT

WES MOORE  
*Governor*

ARUNA MILLER  
*Lieutenant Governor*

YAAKOV "JAKE" WEISSMANN  
*Acting Secretary*

MARC L. NICOLE  
*Deputy Secretary*

**Testimony of  
Department of Budget and Management - Letter of Concern  
SB934/HB1329**

**Education - Public School Construction - Funding**

**Budget and Taxation and Appropriations Committee  
March 11th 2026**

HB1329/SB0934 increases legislative intent to fund public school construction by at least \$100 million, from \$450 million to \$550 million annually, beginning in fiscal year 2027. It also codifies existing language that the annual funding annual goal should be recalculated before the Nancy K. Kopp Public School Facilities Priority Fund a \$70 million capital budget mandate beginning in FY 2027 is funded.

HB 1290 of 2022 established legislative intent to provide \$450 million annually for school construction. HB 1329/SB 934 would increase this annual funding goal by at least \$100 million, to "at least" \$550 million. The bill both amends the enacted intent language to specify the \$450 million funding goal applies to FY 2023 to FY 2026 and codifies the revised intent language to provide \$550 million in the Education Article (Section 5-303(m)).

If enacted, HB1329/SB0934 would create significant pressure on the State's capital budget. Public school construction programs currently comprises 25.7% of the FY 2027 capital budget as proposed and the 5-year CIP. This share would increase to over 31.4% if meeting a \$550 million annual funding goal.

Complying with this legislation would be untenable given limited capital budget capacity. If debt levels remain as planned, increasing funding to the IAC by a minimum of \$100 million would necessitate deferring planned projects or potentially reducing funding for other capital programs, and would severely limit the Governor's and legislature's ability to fund new initiatives or priorities not planned in the CIP. Moreover, providing additional State funds for locally-owned school construction projects diverts resources from critical needs at State facilities. Finally, implementing and administering larger capital programs would likely require additional IAC positions and operational funds at a time when the State is facing economic challenges, including a structural deficit.

**For additional information, contact Dana Phillips at  
(410) 260-6068 or [dana.phillips@maryland.gov](mailto:dana.phillips@maryland.gov)**

45 Calvert Street · Annapolis, MD 21401  
Toll Free: 1-800-705-3493 · TTY Users: Call via Maryland Relay  
<http://dbm.maryland.gov>