

**FAVORABLE Testimony in Support of House Bill 168
Housing and Community Development - Affordable Housing - Educator
Workforce Housing and Municipal Corporations**

**Economic Matters
February 5, 2026
1:00 pm**

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The Maryland State Education Association (MSEA) **supports House Bill 168**, which expands access to affordable housing for educators and local school system employees and strengthens the connection between housing stability and educational opportunity.

House Bill 168 authorizes the Department of Housing and Community Development to use existing financial assistance programs—including loans, grants, and tax incentives—for the development of *educator workforce housing*. The bill also designates teachers and local school system employees as a **specified group** for purposes of affordable housing development, including eligibility under the federal Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) program. These provisions create a clearer pathway for partnerships among state agencies, local governments, school systems, and developers to increase the supply of housing affordable to educators.

MSEA's support is grounded in **MSEA Resolution F.23 – Fair Housing**, which affirms that *“MSEA believes that fair housing practices should be broadened and strengthened to assure each citizen an equal opportunity to reside in a neighborhood of their choice.”* Ensuring educators and local school system employees can access safe and affordable housing in the communities where they work advances this long-standing commitment.

MSEA represents 76,000 educators and school employees who work in Maryland's public schools and community colleges, teaching and supporting our almost 900,000 K-12 students so they can pursue their dreams. MSEA represents more than



44 local affiliates in every county across the state of Maryland, and our parent affiliate is the 3-million-member National Education Association (NEA).

Many educators face rising housing costs and long commutes that hinder recruitment, retention, and engagement in school communities. By recognizing educators as an eligible group under federal housing incentives, particularly LIHTC, House Bill 168 helps leverage public and private investment to support affordable, often mixed-income housing near schools. This targeted approach supports workforce stability and strengthens school and community connections.

We urge the committee to issue a Favorable Report on House Bill 168.