

UNFAVORABLE

Senate Bill 883
Economic Development - Maryland Stadium Authority -
Carroll Park Soccer Stadium and Facility

Senate Finance Committee
March 5, 2026

Sean Johnson, Executive Director

The Maryland State Education Association has no opinion on the merits of the Carroll Park Soccer Stadium and Facility but is compelled to offer this unfavorable testimony because of concerns relative to the funding source for the principal and interest of the bonds for the project.

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).

MSEA supports adequate, sustainable, and predictable funding for Maryland's public schools. A great public school for every child means our students have updated technology, small manageable classes, safe and modern schools, proper healthcare and nutrition, and highly-qualified and highly-effective educators. Protecting the integrity of Maryland's revenue structure is essential to maintaining these investments.

At the start of session, the Department of Legislative Services reported on the gap between ongoing Blueprint revenues and projected Blueprint expenses. The revenues are projected at \$1.5 billion-\$1.6 billion each year through FY30. The projected expenses are at \$3.2 billion-\$4.9 billion over that same period, with a delta of \$1.7 billion-\$3.3 billion that would be covered by general funds.

An important part of those ongoing revenues are dollars from sports wagering. Under the bonding terms of this legislation, the first revenue dollars from sports wagering are diverted to a new Carroll Park Soccer Stadium and Facility Fund before they flow to benefit the Blueprint Fund and the General Fund.

Proponents shared in the hearing for HB 1078 that they intended for the bond support to be available after the deposit to the Blueprint Fund and to take from the General Funds. Such an arrangement would still earn MSEA's unfavorable recommendation. Given the projected Blueprint funding gaps and the further reliance on General Fund dollars to meet state aid for education, the diversion of sports wagering funds at any level moves Maryland further away from the goal to fund the Blueprint.

MSEA requests an unfavorable report of Senate Bill 883.