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BILL: House Bill 473
TITLE: Education- Collective Bargaining - Certificated Employees - Class Size
HEARING DATE: February 17, 2026
POSITION: UNFAVORABLE
COMMITTEE: Government, Labor, and Elections
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The Maryland Association of Boards of Education (MABE), representing all 24 local boards of education in Maryland, **opposes House Bill 473 - Education - Collective Bargaining - Certificated Employees - Class Size.**

House Bill 473 would repeal the prohibition on a public school employer negotiating the maximum number of students assigned to a class. MABE strongly believes it is critical that locally-governed education policies and procedures remain under the authority of boards of education and educators. Each school board must have the right to negotiate with their unions on topics and matters that reflect the specific and diverse academic and operational needs of their system.

While we understand the documented benefits of reducing class size, class size limitations have significant cost implications. Not only could adding class size to collective bargaining agreements result in school systems having to hire more full-time teachers, but decreasing the number of students per class would mean schools would have to increase the number of classrooms—thus having facilities implications. School systems are already facing significant budgeting and school construction challenges. Yet, there is no corresponding increase in funding for teacher salaries, additional full-time teachers, or school construction to account for these inevitable challenges school systems would face if class size were added to collective bargaining agreements.

Additionally, some school systems may have higher class sizes, but more than one educator in the classroom. Although the class size is technically larger, the student to teacher ratio is smaller. This bill does not account for those situations. Further, what one teacher views as the maximum class size they could handle, another teacher may disagree. It is very student, teacher, and context specific. A teacher may feel comfortable with a larger class size if the students require less behavioral or academic support. Whereas a teacher with more students that need additional individualized support, may require a smaller class size. In another instance, it might make sense for a first-year teacher to have a smaller class size, but a veteran teacher could manage a larger

classroom. These decisions are best left to the school administrators and educators in each school.

For these reasons, MABE respectfully requests an **unfavorable report on HB 473**.