



HOWARD COUNTY OFFICE OF COUNTY EXECUTIVE

3430 Courthouse Drive ■ Ellicott City, Maryland 21043 ■ 410-313-2013 Voice/Relay

Calvin Ball
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February 17, 2020

Senator Paul G. Pinsky, Chair
Education, Health and Environmental Affairs
Miller Senate Office Building, 2 West
11 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

Delegate Maggie McIntosh, Chair
Appropriations Committee
House Office Building, 121
6 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

Senator Guy Guzzone, Chair
Budget and Taxation Committee
Miller Senate Office Building, 3 West
11 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

Delegate Anne Kaiser, Chair
Ways and Means Committee
House Office Building, 131
6 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

Re: **TESTIMONY OF SUPPORT**: SB 1000 and HB 1300 – Blueprint for Maryland’s Future
(*Kirwan Commission on Innovation and Excellence in Education*)

Dear Chairs Pinsky, Guzzone, McIntosh and Kaiser,

Howard County Government and the Howard County Public School System has a longstanding history of prioritizing education funding and implementing innovative ways to make one of the nation’s leading school systems support the educational needs of all students, families, and educators. We would like to thank the Maryland Commission on Innovation and Excellence in Education for its work over the last several years to establish a new funding formula and policy priorities for Maryland schools. Senate Bill 1000 and HB 1300 will have a tremendous impact on how the State and local jurisdictions fund education. If passed, this historic legislation would enable all our Maryland counties to further invest in innovative programs while improving student outcomes, enhancing retention and salaries for our educators, and growing school system accountability in an increasingly competitive world.

We are grateful that the Commission’s and the General Assembly’s recommendations promote partnerships among local governments, its community service providers, and residents to maximize available resources so that all Howard County children and youth succeed, regardless of their socioeconomic status.

Last session, we expressed support for the Commission’s policy proposal and are encouraged by the priorities and recommendations put forth. Specifically, we support those recommendations that focus on expanding early childhood education, providing additional supports for our young people experiencing economic or social challenges and students with disabilities, while highlighting alternative career readiness plans.



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Providing resources that stabilize families will allow our young people to take full advantage of the high-quality educational opportunities that are available in our county. We appreciate our state leaders establishing a funding formula that better enables local jurisdictions to invest in improving student outcomes, retention and salaries of our valued educators, and school system accountability.

As an educator and father of two who attend Howard County Public Schools, we believe that local governments can and must play a role in removing educational barriers while increasing access to supportive services for vulnerable families so that all our children from birth to age 24 can succeed.

Howard County is one of the fastest growing school systems in the state. In our first budget (FY20), we approved \$18.2M increase in funding from the previous year, the largest increase in the last five fiscal years. It takes our entire community to work, plan, and exercise fiscal stewardship to further improve life outcomes for all our students, and we applaud you and our state partners for your willingness to seize this critical opportunity.

My Administration unequivocally supports this proposal for historic investment in our students and educators, not only for Howard County, but for jurisdictions across our great state. We sincerely appreciate the courage, leadership, and efforts of the Presiding Officers and our State leaders who have committed to championing funding for both education and school construction this session to foster the very best teaching and learning environment for all of our children and educators in this and future generations.

We look forward to working with you diligently to further investments in public education and urge your partnership and favorable report on SB1000 and HB1300.

Sincerely,

Calvin Ball
County Executive