



HOWARD COUNTY GOVERNMENT

3430 Courthouse Drive

■ Ellicott City, Maryland 21043

March 13, 2019

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

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

Re: **TESTIMONY OF SUPPORT: SB 1030 and HB 1413 – The Blueprint for Maryland’s Future**
(Kirwan Commission)

Dear Chair Pinsky and Chair Kaiser,

Howard County government and the Howard County Public School System have 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 and families. We would like to thank the Maryland Commission on Innovation and Excellence in Education for its work the last several years to establish a new funding formula and policy priorities for Maryland schools. Though the Commission’s work will have a tremendous impact on how the State and local jurisdictions fund education, SB1030 and HB1413 will truly transform our education delivery system.

Howard County strives for equity in our school system, which includes investing in critical school supports so that all children can thrive. We are encouraged by the policy priorities put forth by the Commission and the recommendations outlined in SB1030 and HB1413. Specifically, a focus on expanded early childhood education, additional supports for disconnected youth and students with disabilities, and alternative career readiness plans for struggling learners, exemplify a transformation process taking shape in Annapolis. Howard County has many best practices to share and we are eager to participate in the dialogue.

Education outcomes do not just ‘belong’ to our school systems. Local governments can and must play a role in removing educational barriers and increasing access to supportive services for vulnerable families so that all children from birth to age 24 can succeed. It takes the entire community to work, plan, and invest together before gaps in student achievement will close. Howard County is hopeful that the Commission’s and the General Assembly’s final recommendations promote partnership 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. Providing resources that will help stabilize families will allow our young people to take full advantage of the high-quality learning that exists in our county.

Howard County leaders will continue to prioritize education funding and will monitor closely additional funding requirements placed on county taxpayers. Just as we will continue to do our part in providing the school system with the funding it needs, typically above maintenance of effort, we hope that our



HOWARD COUNTY GOVERNMENT

3430 Courthouse Drive

Ellicott City, Maryland 21043

state leaders will establish a funding formula that better enables local jurisdictions to invest in teacher salaries and improve school system accountability.

Therefore, we look forward to working with you to champion innovative investments in public education. We urge your support and favorable report on SB 1030 and HB 1413.

Sincerely,

Calvin Ball
County Executive

Liz Walsh
Howard County Council, District 1

Opel Jones
Howard County Council, District 2

Christiana Mercer Rigby
Howard County Council, District 3

Deb Jung
Howard County Council, District 4

David Yungmann
Howard County Council, District 5

Cc: President Mike Miller, Speaker Michael Busch, Cheryl Bost, Sean Johnson, Colleen Morris