

BILL: Senate Bill 40
TITLE: Interagency Commission on School Construction – Systemic Renovation Projects – Eligibility
DATE: January 19, 2022
POSITION: SUPPORT
COMMITTEE: Budget and Taxation Committee
CONTACT: John R. Woolums, Esq.

The Maryland Association of Boards of Education (MABE) supports Senate Bill 40, which would clarify that systemic projects submitted for State funding approval are eligible for consideration and approval for funding under the Built to Learn Act and regardless of cost.

MABE's top priorities for the 2022 legislative session relating to school facilities, include:

- ✓ Support for a state funding level of at least \$400 million for school construction and renovation projects for FY 2023 to provide the State's share of approved projects to build, renovate, and improve schools;
- ✓ Support for continued funding and implementation of the Built to Learn Act and its \$2 billion school construction program financed through the Maryland Stadium Authority; and
- ✓ Support for continued funding of projects to improve the health and safety of school facilities.

MABE supports Senate Bill 40 because it is aligned with the equitable goal of ensuring that both the traditional Capital Improvement Program (CIP) and the new Built to Learn Act program administered by the Maryland Stadium Authority are available to local school systems as robust funding sources for new school construction, major renovations, and the typically much smaller systemic projects. Systemic projects include repair or replacement of structures such as roofs, walls, floors, and ceilings; and plumbing and mechanical systems such as heating, ventilation, air conditioning, water supply, electrical, sprinklers and fire detection, and elevators.

Local boards appreciate the State's investments in the annual capital budget and targeted investments to support school safety projects, HVAC and lead remediation projects, energy efficiency projects, and designated funding for school systems with significant enrollment growth. In addition, the State has fulfilled the commitment to fund 21st Century school facilities in the Baltimore City Public School System, including net-zero schools. These initiatives demonstrate the State's commitment to investing in high quality school facilities and learning environments for all students. The Built to Learn Act targets the bulk of its revenue stream to the largest 7 school systems in the State, but a substantial amount is also available to the other 17 school systems. MABE is confident that all 24 school systems would benefit from the passage of Senate Bill 40.

In this context, MABE firmly believes that all sources of school facilities funding should be increased and administered in support of locally prioritized construction, renovation, and systemic projects in each of Maryland's 24 local school systems.

For these reasons, MABE requests a favorable report on Senate Bill 40.