The Board of Education of Anne Arundel County opposes **SB92 MARYLAND SCHOOL OVERCROWDING REDUCTION ACT OF 2018**. This bill would establish the Public School Facility Construction Innovation Incentive Program to provide incentives to encourage public school systems to pursue innovative public school facility construction projects.

The Board of Education of Anne Arundel County opposes SB92 because it would make significant and unnecessary changes to the current process regarding school construction projects. Additionally, this legislation would incentivize the construction of schools that do not meet Maryland high standards for schools regardless of funding or financing method.

This proposed legislation would significantly recast a well-regarded and well-run public school construction program that has been held out as a national model since 1971. The State and local school systems have forged a balanced approach to funding, oversight and a solid working relationship. While clearly not perfect, and always in need of examination, the current system has worked for over 45 years. Passage of SB92 would pre-empt the work of the Commission and substantively reshape the landscape of public school construction in Maryland.

It is important to note that the 21st Century School Facilities Commission (Knott Commission) has not endorsed SB92 or the two major provisions in the bill. The Knott Commission’s final draft report recommends an incentive program, not for less expensive projects, but to “encourage innovation through alternative financing by providing a financial incentive to cover the associated risks.” We believe that this legislation is contrary to the mission, and collaborative responsibility, of school systems and the State to ensure high quality school facilities for all Maryland students.

The Board also has concerns regarding the establishment of the Public School Facility Construction Innovation Incentive Program to provide significant State funding incentives to encourage public school systems to build lower quality schools. We do not believe that promoting less expensive schools that are exempt from many, if not all, school quality standards will result in innovation.

Accordingly, the Board of Education of Anne Arundel County respectfully requests an **UNFAVORABLE** committee report on SB92.