



HB534 PUBLIC SCHOOLS - STATE AID FOR SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION - ELIGIBLE COSTS

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APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

OPPOSE

Jeanette Ortiz, Esq., Legislative & Policy Counsel (410.703.5352)

The Board of Education of Anne Arundel County opposes **HB534 Public Schools - State Aid for School Construction - Eligible Costs**. This bill requires the Interagency Commission on School Construction (IAC) to adopt regulations that include the cost of land acquisition, architectural and engineering services, consulting services, and other planning costs as eligible costs for State reimbursement for specified projects.

The proposed legislation would not apply to Anne Arundel County Public Schools (AACPS) and could actually result in reduced funding for our school system. To be eligible for funding under the proposed legislation, a school system would be required to meet the following criteria:

- Is located in a county that has set the county income tax rate at the maximum percentage authorized under §10-106 of the Tax-General Article;
- Serves a school in which at least 50% of students are eligible for the federal free and reduced price meal program in the most recent fiscal year; and
- Has a total project cost, as initially approved by the Interagency Commission for Planning, equal to at least 90% of the county's total annual operating budget for the current fiscal year.

It appears that the criteria established in the bill would only benefit two counties at this time. The funding that would be made available to these eligible counties would ultimately result in less funding available to the remaining school systems, including AACPS.

Accordingly, the Board of Education of Anne Arundel County respectfully requests an **UNFAVORABLE** committee report on HB534.