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Education Advocate

March 2013

Dear Advocate,

The Baltimore City School Construction and Revitalization Bill is on the move! The House Appropriations Committee voted the bill (HB860) favorably to the floor with amendments. The bill will be debated on the House floor **tonight!** Can you be available during the evening to come support our legislators and help fill the House gallery? We will be organizing carpools to leave from the city. [Click here](#) to let us know your availability!

In This Issue

[Appropriations Approves Balt. City Bill](#)

[Take Action! Call your Delegates!](#)

News: Baltimore City School Construction

Photo Credit: Terra Hiltner

Appropriations Committee Approves Baltimore City School Construction Bill with Amendments

Last night the Appropriations committee considered and adopted amendments to HB 860, the Baltimore City Public School Construction Revitalization Act. These amendments changed the mechanics of how new and renovated schools will be financed and constructed, but still maintains the original intent of establishing a financing mechanism to address the critical facilities needs in Baltimore City Public School buildings and provides the first \$1.1 billion for Phase I of the 10-Year Plan. The bill recognizes the unique position of Baltimore City School buildings and prescribes three main actions to address their deteriorating condition:

Establishes a partnership between the State, Baltimore City, and Baltimore City Public Schools:

- Each entity contributes \$20 million annually to a facilities fund to replace or renovate inadequate school buildings in Baltimore City;
- Funding streams such as the Beverage Container Tax, lottery proceeds, and a new State Aid to Education intercept will provide financial backing to support up to the first \$1.1 billion of the plan.

Leverages the experience and capacity of the Maryland Stadium Authority (Authority) to oversee the construction and revitalization of Baltimore City Public School Buildings:

- The Authority replaces the proposed Baltimore City School Construction Authority as the coordinator for the construction

You won't want to miss this!

The Baltimore City School Construction Bill will be debated on the floor of the House **TONIGHT** [Tell us NOW](#) if you can come down to Annapolis and attend this historic event!



[Click here](#)

to learn about other steps you can take to help win new Buildings for Baltimore City children!



program;

- The Authority is empowered to act on behalf of Baltimore City Public Schools to acquire, construct, or improve public school facilities;
- The Authority is authorized to finance the construction and revitalization program.

Establishes a process for accountability and reporting:

- Ensures all school buildings will continue to be reviewed and approved through the current state process with the Interagency Committee on School Construction (IAC) to safeguard quality;
- Requires the Authority to seek Board of Public Works approval before issuing bonds and to report on the progress of the program to the Maryland General Assembly each year;
- Prescribes a four-party Memorandum of Understanding, that details roles and responsibilities of Baltimore City, City Schools, the IAC, and the Authority.

To read more about the progress of the bill check out [this article](#) in the Baltimore Sun.

Take Action!

Call Your Delegates and Ask Them to Speak Up for Baltimore's Kids!

The Baltimore City School Construction Bill (HB 860) will be on the floor of the House for debate TONIGHT. This means it is more important than ever that your state delegates hear from you and know that you support healthy, modern, and safe buildings for all children in Maryland. Call your 3 delegates today and tell them or leave a message:

"I support HB860, the Baltimore City School Construction and Revitalization Bill. When the bill is debated on the House floor, I would like Delegate X to stand up and speak for it. We need to tell the other Delegates how important this bill is to us. Will you give him/her that message?"

To find out who your delegates are visit www.mdelect.net.

We are now closer than ever to achieving the goal of healthy, safe, and modern school buildings for all the children of Maryland. Please consider spending the evening in Annapolis tonight to watch history in action as this unprecedented legislation is debated on the House floor.

[Click here to sign up.](#)

Thank you for making a difference!

Bebe Verdery
ACLU-MD Education Reform Project

**American Civil Liberties Union of Maryland
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