

ACLU of Maryland Education Advocate

Advocacy for Maryland's At-Risk Students

In This Issue

[School Systems to be Hit by Pension Costs](#)

[Baltimore Education Coalition Rally](#)

[More Details on Senate Committee Actions](#)

An Adequate Education is a Constitutional Right!



[ACLU of Maryland Education Reform Project Website](#)

[Join Our Mailing List!](#)

ACTION ALERT: School Systems to be Hit with Pension Costs - Call House Committee

Committee Votes to Reduce Education Funding by Shifting Pension Costs to Local School Districts

On Friday, the Senate Budget & Tax committee rejected a proposal to cut education funding for the coming year, FY11, but agreed to a last-minute plan to shift nearly \$1 billion in teacher pension costs to local school systems over the following four years. The \$1 billion shift in pensions would have to be covered by local school systems. If the proposal is accepted by the House of Delegates, the pension shift would essentially reduce "Thornton" state education funding to school systems by over \$300 million a year (More details on the Senate action below).

Urge House members to reject this cut. Call your Delegates on the House Appropriations committee today! The Appropriations Committee begins voting on proposals on Tuesday, so make your calls now!

The message: "I ask that you reject the Senate's cuts to education and shift of pension costs to local schools. Please support the Governor's budget and fully fund our schools."

Chairman Norman Conway, 410- 841-3407
Education Subcommittee Chair John Bohanan, 410-841-3227
Delegate Talmadge Branch, Baltimore City District 45, 410-841-3398
Delegate Keith Haynes, Baltimore City District 44, 410-841-3801
Delegate Barbara Robinson, Baltimore City, District 40, 410-841-3520

Delegate Melony Griffith, District 25 - Prince George's County, 410-841-3557

Delegate James E. Proctor, Jr., Prince George's, 410-841-3083

Delegate Susan L.M. Aumann, Baltimore County, 410-841-3528

Delegate Gail H. Bates, Carroll/Howard Counties, 410-841-3556

Delegate Wendell Beitzel, Allegany, Garrett & Washington Counties, 410-841-3435

Delegate William Bronrott, Montgomery County, 410-841-3026

Delegate Galen Clagett, Frederick/Washington Counties, 410-841-3436

Delegate Steven J. DeBoy, Sr., Baltimore/Howard Counties, 410-841-3328

Delegate Tawanna P. Gaines, Prince George's County, 410-841-3058

Delegate Guy Guzzone, Howard County, 410-841-3471

Delegate Henry B. Heller, Montgomery County, 410-841-3528

Delegate Mary-Dulany James, Harford and Cecil Counties, 410-841-3331

Delegate Adrienne Jones, Baltimore County, 410-841-3391

Delegate Murray F. Levy, Charles County, 410-841-3325

Delegate Steve Schuh, Anne Arundel County, 410-841-3206

Delegate Theodore "Ted" Sophocleus, Anne Arundel, 410-841-3372

Delegate Ana Sol Guitierrez, Montgomery County, 410-841-3181

Delegate Nancy Stocksdale, Baltimore/Carroll Counties, 410-841-3077

FOR MORE DETAILED INFORMATION, SEE THE ARTICLE BELOW ON THE SENATE COMMITTEE'S DECISIONS.

Baltimore Education Coalition Rally Draws More than 600 to Annapolis to Protect Education Funding

More than six hundred parents, students, advocates and educators gathered on Lawyer's Mall in Annapolis on Monday, March 1st to fight against possible cuts to education funding. The Baltimore Education Coalition (BEC), planned the event to protect the Governor's current budget

which fully funds education. BEC is a group of more than 25 organizations and schools from Baltimore City, including the ACLU of Maryland, that was created in 2009 to protect funding for Baltimore's public schools. More than 40 schools and organizations sent busloads of students, parents, and advocates to attend the event.

After the event, Rev. Kevin Andre Brooks, Pastor of Gethsemane A.M.E. Church, who emceed the event said, "The students, teachers, and community representatives were energized and mobilized to take action and young people were able to see how the governmental process works and how it is directly connected to them during the rally."

Fourteen of Baltimore's 21 Senators and Delegates spoke at the rally and pledged to support the Governor's budget and fully fund education and to oppose legislation that would allow "blanket" reductions in local education funding.

More Details on the Senate Committee's Action to Shift Pensions Costs to Schools

The Senate committee had earlier rejected a proposal to cut the Geographic Cost of Education Index by \$10.5 million (part of the "Thornton" formula), and on Friday, rejected the proposal to cut \$60 million for the upcoming budget year, Fiscal Year 2011 (July 2010 - June 2011). In an amendment not distributed to the public, however, the committee voted to begin a phase-in cost shift of teacher pensions to local school systems over the next 3 years.

Currently, teacher pension costs are paid 100% by the state. There has been an interest by certain legislators over the past few years to require the local governments to pick up a part of these costs, since education funding in Maryland is borne by both state and local governments. In the plan approved on Friday, however, it is not the local government - counties/Baltimore City - that would be responsible for covering the transferred pension costs. The amendment requires the local school systems to bear the additional costs, which they can only do by cutting their budgets or seeking additional funding from their county governments to offset the new requirement that they pay into the teacher pension system. Libraries and community colleges are affected similarly.

The proposed pension shift aims to result in a 50-50 sharing of pension costs between the state and school systems. Unlike the "Thornton" education formula, the new proposal does not shift pension costs in a wealth-equalized manner. School systems in poorer counties will have to bear the same percentage of costs as those in the more wealthy counties. School systems in less-wealthy counties will be less likely to receive additional funding from their county governments to help cover the new pension costs. These school systems will most likely have to cut funding from the classroom to fulfill their responsibility to contribute to the pension system.

Costs to school systems statewide rise in:

Fiscal Year - FY 2012 (July 2011- June 2012): \$60 million

FY13: \$182 million

FY14: \$307 million

FY15: \$315 million increases ongoing.

Costs to Baltimore City Schools rise from \$5.8 million in FY12 to \$18 million in FY13, \$29.9 million in FY14, and \$30.1 million in FY15, and increases will continue beyond FY15.

[Click here to see the estimated costs for each school district.](#)

Education Reform Project

Bebe Verdery, Director

JaCina Stanton, Education Advocate

Frank Patinella, Education Advocate

[Forward email](#)

Email Marketing by

✉ **SafeUnsubscribe**®

This email was sent to benrkaufman@gmail.com by education@aclu-md.org.
[Update Profile/Email Address](#) | Instant removal with [SafeUnsubscribe](#)™ | [Privacy Policy](#).



American Civil Liberties Union of Maryland | 3600 Clipper Mill Road, Suite 350 | Baltimore | MD | 21217