



Education Advocate

Senate budget preserves education funding *Contact the House!*

Your calls, e-mails, and lobbying efforts helped protect public schools in the Senate version of the budget packed, which passed yesterday! The 1% inflation factor for education remains in the budget, which will mean a small but important increase for every school system. In Baltimore City, the increase is about \$7 million for the coming year. The Senate heard the message that some amount of taxes are preferable to huge cuts to education and health. Their actions did include shifting some of the teacher pension costs to the counties, but it would take place over four years, rather than one year as originally proposed by the Governor. Avoiding education cuts is contingent upon passing the pension shift in the budget package. Counties will get some additional grants and revenue to help meet their pension obligation.

Want to help push this plan forward?

Call or e-mail [your three delegates](#) and [Speaker Busch](#) with the following message:

Please protect education funding, including the 1% inflation factor, and raise significant revenue from those who can afford it. Keep the increase for the Aging Schools Program, which was passed by the Senate.

The Senate budget bill raises about \$600 million in new revenue, and includes a tax credit for low income taxpayers. The additional \$30 million generated from top earners will fund an increase in the Aging Schools Program, a building renovation program that benefits every Maryland school system. For example, Baltimore City would receive \$7 million. Baltimore County and Prince George's County would each receive \$6 million.

The Senate also significantly strengthened the "Maintenance of Effort" (MOE) requirement to assure continued local (county) funding of public schools. Counties must fund the school board's budget at the same per pupil amount as the year before, or seek a waiver from the Maryland State Board of Education. The bill language authorizes counties with property tax caps to exceed that local limit to fund the school budget.

Want to learn more? [Read today's Baltimore Sun article](#) on the Senate plan.

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American Civil Liberties Union of Maryland Education Reform Project

Bebe Verdery, Director
Frank Patinella, Education Advocate
Jessica Clark, Education Advocate
Ben Kaufman, Education Associate

410.889.8555 | education@aclu-md.org | www.aclu-md.org

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