

To the Howard County Council regarding CB 26-2022

I'm writing in support of CB26-2022. I feel that it is a win win for our community and for the school system. I hope that it will help to ensure that developments that are supposed to have both commercial and residential will in fact have both and that it will give HCPSS more flexibility in providing pre-kindergarten programs close to where the students live.

As a teacher's assistant at a preschool in Columbia which operates within a community center, I know that we can deliver high quality pre-k programs outside of a school building. As a parent that has volunteered many hours inside a large and overcrowded elementary school, I know that space is at a premium and that the logistics of lining up children to get to various parts of the building can really add up to a lot of instructional time lost from what is often an already short school day.

I hope that you will support our school system and the children of our county and pass CB26-2022.

Thank you for your time.

Meg Ricks

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Sayers, Margery

From: Bonnie Bricker <bonbricker@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, April 18, 2022 7:18 PM
To: CouncilMail
Subject: Testimony CB26-2022

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Copy of Testimony:

Howard County Council 4.18.2022

CB 26-2022: Favorable

AN ACT amending the Howard County Code to include building development or other development in the process for reserving land for public facilities; and generally relating to reserving land for public facilities.

I wish to add a resounding "yes!" to this bill which would create the possibility of acquisition of space for preschool and PreK spaces in commercial or other spaces nearer students' homes or where their families shop or access services. This possibility can help families feel more connected to these classrooms, and aid family access for parents to participate in classroom events or activities and meet for parent conferences. While these sites should be carefully selected to ensure safety for families, students, and staff to access and use these sites, passage of this measure will help to bring the school-to-community connection closer to many more families while providing expedited access to space needed for the Blueprint for Maryland's Future. It will also aid in finding the families we wish to enroll in our programs when they see programs housed in their communities.

As a win-win for county planning and our students and families, I urge you to pass this bill. Thank you, Councilmember Walsh for your creative problem-solving.

--
Bonnie Bricker
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Lisa Markovitz
President, The People's Voice
CB26 Support

This testimony is from The People's Voice and the Howard County County Citizens Association. Howard County really needs to start implementing land banking across the County. Using trusts to get County owned property for its needs is the way to go. For now, looking at improved ways to meet needs can be done in some instances with easy new ideas.

Specifically, CB26 allows for the use of land for public use, by allowing commercial space requirements to include institutional uses such as a Regional Early Childhood Center. This would address needs expressed by the HCPSS and developers as well.

Developers often want to reduce requirements for commercial space in mixed zones due to concerns about vacancies, and the higher economic value of residential space.

Regarding the Blueprint for MD's future, the HCPSS has expressed concern regarding limited space for PreK expansion.

Seems like a win win.

Thank you Council Member Walsh.

Lisa Markovitz
President, The People's Voice
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4.15.2022
CB2622

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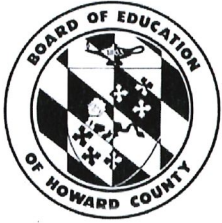
Testimony to Howard County Council 4.18.2022

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of Howard County**

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**Board of Education of Howard County
Testimony Submitted to the Howard County Council
April 18, 2022**

CB26-2022: FAVORABLE

AN ACT amending the Howard County Code to include building development or other development in the process for reserving land for public facilities; and generally relating to reserving land for public facilities.

As the Howard County Public School System began planning for sweeping education reforms under the Blueprint for Maryland's Future following its passage in 2021, one of the first hurdles the Board of Education of Howard County (the Board) discussed with our local elected representatives is an issue that has long plagued Howard County. Limited availability of physical space to accommodate a growing student population will undoubtedly be exacerbated in coming years.

In particular, the Blueprint envisions a world-class educational system that begins with full-day prekindergarten. In order to support early access to education for three- and four-year-olds, beginning with low-income students, the Blueprint will provide funding to both public and community-based early education programs that meet rigorous quality standards. Although a pivotal first step in propelling education forward in Maryland, these expanded services will require a significant increase in classroom seats in Howard County.

CB26-2022 was introduced by Council Member Liz Walsh with the intent to find opportunities for public acquisition of building space, by altering the Planning, Zoning, and Subdivisions and Land Development Regulations section of the Howard County Code. Specifically, under existing zoning codes that allow for the reservation of land for future condemnation or acquisition for public use, a provision for BUILDING DEVELOPMENT OR OTHER DEVELOPMENT has been added throughout. As authorizing legislation giving the school system the option to think outside the proverbial "box" of land acquisition when looking for ways to expand capacity, the Board supports CB26-2022.

Moreover, the Sponsor indicates CB26-2022 could simultaneously address requests from developers to reduce the commercial requirements in certain zoning areas due to difficulties filling the commercial spaces which affects their economic investments. This forward-thinking allows for commercial spaces within those buildings to be reserved instead for use for institutional purposes like a Regional Early Childhood Center.

The Board commends Council Member Walsh for her innovation in looking for mutually beneficial opportunities for Howard County, and urges the Council to vote favorably on CB26-2022.