



Senate Bill 515

Career and Technology Education and Workforce Investment Act

MACo Position: **SUPPORT**

To: Budget and Taxation Committee

Date: February 21, 2018

From: Robin Clark Eilenberg

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **SUPPORTS** SB 515. This legislation creates a grant program for the capital equipment needed in career and technology education.

This legislation repeals a spending mandate on certain scholarships, making it optional, and sets forth a new facility grant program based on an optional appropriation. For the facility grants, the Governor may provide up to \$2 million annually for career and technology education classrooms. Local governments would be required to provide a match for grants made, according to the established state-local cost share rates.

Maryland counties partner with the State on school construction funding. With more than 50% construction cost increases over the past five years, however, it has been difficult for counties and the State to keep pace with school construction needs. The State's school facilities are an average age of 29 years, yet must support educational goals of the 21st Century – including providing training for fast-paced technology fields.

According to the Department of Legislative Services, there is no state grant program specifically for the capital equipping of schools with career and technology education programs. This program will fill a niche in the State's school construction investments and support a growth trajectory of Maryland's education system.

For these reasons, MACo requests a **FAVORABLE** report on SB 515.