



## **Senate Bill 551**

### *Workgroup on School Construction Incentives*

MACo Position: **SUPPORT**

To: Appropriations Committee

Date: March 30, 2021

From: Drew Jabin

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **SUPPORTS** SB 551 as passed by the Senate. This bill establishes the Workgroup on School Construction Incentives, which includes MACo as a stakeholder in the process of making recommendations on appropriate incentives within the school construction process.

In recent years, both the “Knott” Commission (21st Century School Facilities Commission) and its successor (Workgroup on the Assessment and Funding of School Facilities) have brought multiple stakeholders together to contemplate matters such as a uniform facility index. As no consensus on the details of such a calculation has yet been reached, this Workgroup is the correct next step forward. Bringing together all relevant stakeholders to recommend measurements and policies that fairly and reasonably balance the complex and sometimes contradictory matters of “urgency” and “prudent actions” is of the utmost importance when moving forward. Seeing how these proposed changes would affect a range of actual school facility projects would help policymakers better gauge the effects of any new incentives.

School systems, with their design professionals, already have incentives to promote efficiencies, and to engage in ongoing school maintenance. Some of these are enshrined in State law, some are functions of fiscal constraints, and others arise from sensible management practices. MACo looks forward to participating in continued discussion on evolving the process of school construction incentives and accordingly **SUPPORTS** SB 551 as passed by the Senate, which defers the policy issues to a more stakeholder-driven process.