
**Testimony in Support of House Bill 256
Maryland Estate Tax – Unified Credit**

**House Ways & Means Committee
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The Maryland State Education Association supports House Bill 256, which restores the millionaire estate tax that will benefit the General Fund in ways that can be used to implement the new school funding formula our students and schools need.

MSEA represents 75,000 educators and school employees who work in Maryland’s public schools, teaching and preparing our 896,837 students for the careers and jobs of the future. MSEA also represents 39 local affiliates in every county across the state of Maryland, and our parent affiliate is the 3 million-member National Education Association (NEA).

MSEA supports passage of an adequate, sustainable, predictable revenue stream that will adequately fund both the operating and construction costs of our public schools. A great public school for every child means our students have updated technology, small manageable classes, safe and modern schools, proper healthcare and nutrition, and have highly qualified and highly effective educators. The work of the Commission on Innovation and Excellence in Education (Kirwan Commission) further recommends improvements to access to Pre-K and Career Technology Education, as well as expansion of the educator workforce and increased salaries to help deliver individualized instruction and recruit and retain the best workforce in the country.

The Kirwan Commission has determined that Maryland will need to invest substantially more resources into education for our citizens become truly successful in the very competitive national and global economies. This is the time to be locating and allocating more resources to education, and House Bill 256 is part of that funding solution.

This bill was introduced in the 2015 legislative session, and the fiscal note at the time estimated the bill would generate \$236.7 million from FY17 to FY20. During that time, it’s estimated that every school in the state has been underfunded by \$2 million per year. Our kids can’t wait any longer. The revenue generated in this bill is an important part of investing in Maryland’s future.

MSEA urges a favorable report of House Bill 256.