

From: O'Neal, Jonathan

Sent: Tuesday, March 25, 2014 8:59 AM

To: 'nancy.stocksdales@house.state.md.us'; Krebs, Susan Delegate (Laptop) (Delegate.S.Krebs@house.state.md.us); Ready, Justin Delegate; 'donald.elliott@house.state.md.us'

Cc: Guthrie, Stephen; Harrison, Virginia; Doolan, James; Seidel, Jennifer; Shreeve, Barbara; Bauer, Gary

Subject: Urgent Request for Budget and SB 534/HB814 Action

Importance: High

Dear Carroll Delegation:

I am writing to you after consulting with Superintendent Guthrie. Over the last several days, in addition to working with you, we have monitored the budget process in the House. After observing the Appropriations Committee's action Friday afternoon and making inquiries through our various professional contacts in Annapolis, we believe we are at a crucial point regarding the prospect of Senate Budget Amendment 93 being incorporated into the House Budget or through Conference Committee. Moreover, we feel we are at the same critical point for the adoption of SB534/HB814, which secures hold-harmless funding in the subsequent two fiscal years. As the amended forms of these bills contain an out-year budget adjustment guaranteeing the FY15 hold-harmless in FY16, the bills must pass in concert with a State Budget that contains Senate Budget Amendment 93.

I know that you share our concern with these two budget actions, therefore, I will not recount here the vital, positive impact that the two items have for CCPS. We all understand that they are essential to our school system. Instead, I express with the greatest urgency our belief that it is now necessary for our Delegation to partner immediately with Delegate Bietzel from Garrett County, Delegate Arentz of Kent County, and any other delegates with whom you can build a coalition, and promote these budget actions by ensuring your support of the House budget if these two items are approved by the House. Without this commitment, we believe that the amendment will not leave the House or survive Conference with CCPS included in the hold-harmless provision. It is our great concern that, unless our Delegation offers its support to the budget, language will be introduced on the floor or in Conference that will condition the amendment and SB 534/HB814 so that only school systems of 5,000 or fewer students are awarded the hold-harmless thereby supporting Garrett and Kent and excluding CCPS.

I understand that there are many aspects to the State budget that conflict with your core principles. We, too, maintain very serious reservations about the underfunding of the pension system. We, too, recognize that the money required for the hold-harmless is minute relative to the entire State budget and other unfavorable expenditures that are adopted annually. However, the unfortunate reality is that these types of budget component exist every year and, given the composition of the General Assembly, will

pass again this year. The difference this year is that there are two measures, the amendment and SB 534/HB814, that offer critical relief to our school system for the next three fiscal years.

In light of this reality and the urgency of the situation, we are asking that you support the budget to ensure the three-year hold-harmless provisions for CCPS, despite the overarching, philosophical concerns you may have with the budget. While such bold action may give you pause, it is now in the vital interest of CCPS and our programs. The Board of Education and Superintendent Guthrie will support your action vigorously and publicly. They also will support your actions and explain the reasons for such action to the citizens of Carroll County.

Thank you for considering this urgent request. We truly do believe it is necessary at this stage. Please do not hesitate to contact me or Superintendent Guthrie with any questions or if we may offer support to your efforts.

Jon



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