



**Howard County Council Public Hearing
FY 2019 Capital Budget
April 25, 2018**

Testimony

Good evening Council Chair Sigaty and Council members. As chair of the Association of Community Services Public Policy Committee it is my privilege to offer support for several HCPSS projects that are included in the Executive Proposed FY 2019 Capital Budget.

With our community's heightened awareness of the intrinsic link between quality schools and the availability of a full range of housing options, ACS is pleased with the extensive number of School System FY 2019 projects proposed in the Capital budget. The renovation, repair and replacement projects are critical to maintaining a strong system infrastructure.

In light of the legislated restrictions on housing development in the recently enacted Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance, you will not be surprised that ACS is particularly supportive of **Projects E1045 and C0352**. The former will enable the System to manage the disbursement of "Relocatable Classrooms" to help ensure elementary, middle and high schools are within capacity to the degree possible. The latter project will enable purchase of property so the System can move forward with planning and design for the much needed high school that will serve our county's southeast population. Similarly, **Project C0359** will enable the County to acquire in FY 2019 the land necessary for construction of a new elementary school in the Turf Valley neighborhood of Ellicott City. Each of these projects, as they progress, will help the system manage school capacity thereby enabling Council consideration of housing, including affordable housing, development in these selected areas.

Admittedly not having the details of the rationale, we would like to express a concern about zeroing out FY 2019 funding for **Project E0989—Barrier-Free Projects**. There has been an investment (\$5.6 million) since 1989; and the investment picks up again in FY 2020 at \$200,000 per year through 2024. We have two questions. First, is there perhaps leftover funding to enable some projects in 2019? Second, will a long-term investment (FY2020-2024) of \$200,000 be sufficient to assure, as the project states, "school buildings and school sites accessible to the public, students, teachers and staff"?

It has been my privilege to offer this testimony on behalf of our 145 nonprofit member organizations and community advocates who help provide the safety net for thousands of vulnerable residents in our community. Thank you.

Respectfully,

Jackie Eng
ACS Public Policy Chairperson