Maryland PTA submits this testimony in support of House Bill 1540 ("HB 1540"). HB 1540 would:

- Require the Department of Environment work in coordination with the Maryland Department of Health, the State Department of Education, the Department of Housing and Community Development and the Department of General Services to adopt regulations to establish uniform Standards of Mold Assessment and Remediation
- Establish best practices for eliminating the risk of mold hazards
- Require local jurisdictions to conduct inspections on School Facilities, Child Care Centers, Nursing Homes, Assisted Living Facilities, and Rental Dwellings
- Establish a process for third-party inspectors to perform the inspections
- Establish a registry of verified third-party inspectors
- Give School Systems, Child Care Centers, Nursing Homes, Assisted Living Facilities and Landlords reasonable time to prepare for implementation
- Adopt penalties for not following the law
- Create an oversight mechanism via Indoor Air Quality Reporting to the Department of Environment beginning in 2023

Earlier this session MDPTA opposed House Bill 7 ("HB 7") that was heard in the Ways and Means Committee. We considered that bill to have great intentions, but it was not specific enough to be effective. While HB 1540 has addressed several concerns raised against HB 7 such as procedures for inspecting and identifying mold hazards and mold remediation standards at least as stringent as EPA technical guidance, it still requires additional amendments to be fully supported by MDPTA. Three
proposed amendments to HB 1540 would greatly improve the specific value to students enrolled in Maryland public schools:

1) Clearly establish the indoor air quality standards referenced on Page 4, lines 21-22 of HB 1540. The current lines refer to a non-existent section (6-1602) of the Environment Article. As the only obvious dependencies on this seem to be the cross-filed SB 1067, this should be defined now. Anything short of establishing these standards now leaves open the window of ambiguity and interpretation.

2) Specify semi-annual testing windows based on industry feedback for Public Schools only, in order that students are protected from mold hazards year-round.

3) The reporting requirement (Section D) found on Page 7, lines 7-12, should explicitly call for the results from Public Schools to be posted on the Department of the Environment website and provided upon request as written reports. This completes the oversight goal and would encourage individual school districts to proactively address reporting through their local resources before the annual report results were available.

Incorporation of these 3 amendments would satisfy the general goal of providing safe learning environments while promoting transparency and community awareness of any changes in these environments. Accordingly, Maryland PTA recommends a favorable report with the recommended amendments.

Respectfully Submitted,

Edna Harvin Battle

Dr. Edna Harvin Battle
President