

Montgomery County Education Association

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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STATEMENT: Montgomery County Education Leaders Urge Gov. Hogan to Restore School Funding

Rockville, Maryland – The following statement is attributed to Montgomery County Education Association President **Doug Prouty**, Montgomery County Board of Education President **Patricia O'Neill**, Montgomery County Council of Parent-Teacher Associations President **Frances Frost**, Service Employees International Union Local 500 President **Merle Cuttitta**, and Montgomery County Association of Administrators and Principals President **James Koutsos**:

"Dear Governor Hogan: We urge you to reach a compromise with the legislature that would fully restore the funding to K-12 Public Education, including the full restoration of the Geographic Cost of Education Index. Every school system in the state of Maryland has been through a prolonged period of cuts due to the recession. The other public services have experienced similar hardship. The counties simply cannot make up the difference should you stick to your position of funding less than the full amount recommended by the Thornton formula, including GCEI.

"In Montgomery County, MCPS faces a shortfall of \$34,000,000 even with the restored funding the Legislature has recommended. This will result in decreased services for our students and increased class sizes. The amended budget you sent to the Legislature would magnify these already painful cuts and make it more difficult for us to realize an improvement in the achievement gaps that are the central issue in public education today.

"Your emphasis on making Maryland a more business friendly state is at odds with the cuts you are recommending. Our public school systems are important selling points Maryland has to attract and retain businesses, both large and small. We believe that the budget passed by both the House and the Senate crafts a reasonable compromise between the short terms needs of our students and the citizens of Maryland for FY'16, and the long term needs we have to be on sound financial footing. Please don't be penny wise and pound foolish.

"We urge you to support the Legislature's bipartisan budget that will respect the incredible hard work our students do every day. They will thank you for it, as will their parents and the supporters of Public Education throughout the state."