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Bruce: Who Should Pay For New Schools?

Posted By [A Dagger Reader](#) On October 15, 2009 @ 10:52 pm In [The School Yard](#) | [5 Comments](#)

The following was submitted by Morita Bruce:

Do you support a tax increase to pay for recently-built schools? Should Red Pump Elementary School or other school construction projects be stopped?

If your answer is NO to either of these, then oppose Bill 09-29, School Development Impact Fee, because this Bill stops the school impact fees charged on new homes.

New homes bring more kids into the school system. History reveals how many additional kids, on average, will come to school from those houses. Without new homes, we wouldn't need to build new school capacity. (Renovate, yes, but not increase the total space for more students.)

Now consider BRAC. We're told that the next few years will bring tens of thousands of new, high-income workers to Harford. For every 1,000 new houses they buy, their impact fees provide over \$8,000,000. Even if BRAC just returns us to our normal building levels of 2,000 new homes a year, that's over \$16,000,000 a year in fees.

Harford County has already already made painful cuts in services and personnel. More are on the horizon. Many Harford residents are already struggling to pay taxes. It's unfair to increase everyone's taxes to "help" those who can afford to buy themselves brand new houses.

Now is NOT the time to give up this crucial revenue source. Those with a steady job who want and can afford to build new homes won't change their mind just because Harford charges a 2% or 3% impact fee. But Harford can't afford to lose that \$16,000,000 a year.

Time to decide: Should Harford surrender impact fees that help offset the costs of school construction? If your answer is NO, then ask the County Council to vote NO on Bill 09-29. Make your voice heard at the County Council public hearing Tuesday evening, 6 pm, October 20.

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