

HB1204

The Inclusive Schools Act

02/26/2020

Ways & Means Committee

Support

To the Honorable Anne R. Kaiser and esteemed members of the committee:

I write in support of the Inclusive Schools Act, SB0933/HB1204. This important bill introduced by Senator Cory McCray and Delegate Jeanelle Wilkins would codify anti-discrimination protection for all students, pre-k through 12 who are enrolled in our public schools of Maryland.

Although the Maryland State Department of Education has provided clear language for how to include all students and staff regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity, these protections are considered guidelines and have not been adopted as policy by many local school boards. I have been trying to work with the Talbot County School Board for over a year to adopt the MSDE recommendations but they have refused because it is not Maryland law.

Our children seek a safe and nurturing environment in which to learn. I've met numerous teachers working to create that safe environment for all children. These students and teachers need our support with passing the Inclusive Schools Act so that the law supports their good work.

I am proud to live in a state that is a leader for creating protective policies. I hope we can continue to give this important support by extending much-needed protection to all children living in Maryland. Respectfully,

Lauren Harton

51 Londonderry Dr

Easton, MD 21601