



Written support for Maryland Senate Bill 705

This legislation is a step in the right direction for Maryland, aligning with many other states that are moving towards reducing or eliminating the use of seclusion due to the long-lasting traumatic effects on children. We know firsthand that restrictive practices can be safely replaced by alternatives. We know this because we have done it! Grafton Integrated Health Network in Winchester, VA — an organization serving children and adults with autism and co-occurring psychiatric diagnoses — initiated an agency-wide restraint reduction over a decade ago, achieving compelling results: reducing the use of restraints by 99.8 percent, **eliminating the use of seclusion**, and significantly reducing the number of injuries to both clients and those who care for and educate them. Today, Grafton is helping other schools and organizations across North America to do the same through **Ukeru**, which provides training for a safe, comforting and restraint-free approach to crisis management. Thank you for taking on this issue and working to keep students and school staff safe.

Submitted by: Kim Sanders, COO of Grafton Integrated Health Network & President of Ukeru Systems