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Budget and Taxation Committee
Chair, Capital Budget Subcommittee

Chair, Senate Democratic Caucus

THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Testimony of Senator Craig J. Zucker
Senate Bill - 705 - Education - Physical Restraint and Seclusion - Limitations,
Reporting, and Training
Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee
March 2nd, 2022
1:00pm
Position: SUPPORT

Good afternoon Chairman Pinsky, Vice Chairman Kagan, and distinguished members of the committee. It is my pleasure to testify today in **support of Senate Bill - 705 - Education - Physical Restraint and Seclusion - Limitations, Reporting, and Training.**

Senate Bill 705 addresses the use of restraint and seclusion, two techniques used disproportionately in public schools to manage the behavior of students with disabilities. These techniques can result in serious physical harm or even death.

This legislation also prohibits seclusion in public schools and limits its use in nonpublic special education schools. A medical professional who is familiar with the student is directly observing the student, and says that seclusion can be used.

This legislation codifies existing state regulations on the use of restraint in all schools, and on the use of seclusion in a nonpublic school. The State Department of Education must develop an accountability system that measures compliance with the regulations on the use of physical restraint and seclusion as defined in SB 705.

Restraint and seclusion are extreme measures that should be used only as a final resort within very strict limits, or better yet not used at all. This bill would provide those stringent limits to prevent restraint and seclusion from occurring in Maryland schools and would be a great step towards protecting children with disabilities.

For these reasons, I urge a favorable report on Senate Bill 705, as amended. Thank you for your kind consideration.