



March 2, 2022

The Honorable Paul G. Pinsky
Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee
2 West Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: Support – SB 705: Education – Physical Restraint and Seclusion – Limitations, Reporting, and Training

Dear Chairman Pinsky and Honorable Members of the Committee:

The Maryland Psychiatric Society (MPS) and the Washington Psychiatric Society (WPS) are state medical organizations whose physician members specialize in diagnosing, treating, and preventing mental illnesses, including substance use disorders. Formed more than sixty-five years ago to support the needs of psychiatrists and their patients, both organizations work to ensure available, accessible, and comprehensive quality mental health resources for all Maryland citizens; and strive through public education to dispel the stigma and discrimination of those suffering from a mental illness. As the district branches of the American Psychiatric Association covering the state of Maryland, MPS and WPS represent over 1000 psychiatrists and physicians currently in psychiatric training.

MPW/WPS support Senate Bill 705: Education – Physical Restraint and Seclusion – Limitations, Reporting, and Training (SB 705). Limiting the use of restraint and seclusion should always be the goal of schools and behavioral health institutions. Unfortunately, the limited use of restraints and seclusion is sometimes needed for the safe treatment and education of those with developmental delays and emotional disturbances. Therefore, it is critical that whenever those means are used, each use should be analyzed in order to determine the necessity and alternative approaches. This type of analysis is required under the CFR for youth residential treatment centers; similar analysis requirements should be required for school settings. In addition, those using restraints/seclusion should always be educated on trauma-informed care.

SB 705 will help ensure that the use of restraints/seclusion is limited in school settings and when used appropriate monitoring occurs to make sure the interventions are necessary and not over or misused. For all the reasons above, MPS/WPS urges this honorable committee to give a favorable report to SB 705.

If you have any questions with regard to this testimony, please feel free to contact Thomas Tompsett Jr. at tommy.tompsett@mdlobbyist.com.

Respectfully submitted,
The Maryland Psychiatric Society and the Washington Psychiatric Society
Legislative Action Committee