



## MARYLAND LEGISLATIVE LATINO CAUCUS

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**TO:** Delegate Vanessa E. Atterbary, Chair  
Delegate Alonzo T. Washington, Vice Chair  
Ways and Means Committee Members  
**FROM:** Maryland Legislative Latino Caucus (MLLC)  
**DATE:** January 31, 2022  
**RE:** HB0084 Crimes on School Grounds

### **The MLLC supports HB0084 Crimes on School Grounds**

The MLLC is a bipartisan group of Senators and Delegates committed to supporting legislation that improves the lives of Latinos throughout our state. The MLLC is a crucial voice in the development of public policy that uplifts the Latino community and benefits the state of Maryland. Thank you for allowing us the opportunity to express our support of HB0084

Criminalizing kids for misbehaviors that pose little to no risk to public safety is shown by research to disproportionately push kids that are already underserved and more likely to be subject to biases and harsher discipline into the system. This has been proven to be especially prevalent for girls, kids from poor communities, kids of color, and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and gender non-conforming (LGBT/GNC) kids.

This bill intends to rectify juvenile incarceration by protecting children from suffering aggressive consequences for adolescent misbehavior. The justice system is not designed to support kids as they grapple with developmental changes or to address the underlying issues that may be causing them to “act out.” Instead, court involvement and the incarceration that may follow increases the risk of the children engaging in future delinquent (criminal) behaviors and moving deeper into the system. Given this, the bill would ameliorate consequences regarding juvenile misbehavior, ultimately reducing adolescent incarceration and instead properly aiding those who are already at a disadvantage with the system by repealing and reenacting, with amendments, Article – Education, Section 26–101, Annotated Code of Maryland. Which states that minors can be not only arrested, but criminally charged for common adolescent misbehavior, such as storming out of class, or other non-violent incidents.

For these reasons, the Maryland Legislative Latino Caucus respectfully requests a favorable report on HB0084.