



Testimony - HB 1513, Public Schools - School Security Personnel - Prohibition of
Immigration Investigation and Enforcement Functions

Favorable

House Ways & Means Committee

March 11, 2025

Terrence Cavanagh

On Behalf of SEIU Local 500

Honorable Chairwoman Atterbeary & Members of the House Ways & Means Committee:

SEIU Local 500 represents over 23,000 workers across Maryland including over 10,000 educational support professionals in Montgomery County Public Schools. Among our members are security personnel that protect our students. We stand in strong support of House Bill 1513, which seeks to prohibit school resource officers and school security employees from engaging in federal immigration investigation and enforcement functions within Maryland public schools. This bill is a necessary step to ensure that all students, regardless of their immigration status or background, feel safe and secure in their learning environment.

Our public schools should be places where students can focus on their education without fear of immigration enforcement actions disrupting their academic experience. The presence of school security personnel is meant to protect students from threats to their safety, not to serve as an extension of federal immigration authorities. HB 1513 ensures that school resource officers and security employees remain dedicated to their primary mission—protecting students and fostering a positive school climate.

By explicitly prohibiting school security personnel from participating in immigration enforcement, this bill reinforces Maryland's commitment to creating welcoming and inclusive schools. It will help build trust between students, their families, and school officials, encouraging greater engagement in the educational process without fear of deportation or family separation. Research has shown that when students feel safe at school, they are more likely to succeed academically and socially.

Furthermore, HB 1513 aligns with the fundamental principles of public education: to serve all students equitably, regardless of their immigration status. The role of school resource officers and security staff should not be conflated with federal immigration enforcement efforts, which could lead to unnecessary trauma and disruptions to students' education.

We urge the Maryland General Assembly to pass HB 1513 to uphold the integrity of our public schools and protect the rights of all students to learn in a safe and supportive environment.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Terrence Cavanagh
On Behalf of SEIU Local 500