



## **HB612 Public Schools – Lifesaver Schools Program – Establishment**

*Wednesday, February 12, 2025*

WAYS & MEANS

### **SUPPORT**

The Maryland Association of Student Councils (MASC) requests a favorable report on HB612.

The Maryland Association of Student Councils (MASC) is a youth-led organization composed of secondary school student councils all across the state advocating for the best interest of Maryland students. We have passed a resolution in favor of this bill, voted on by a delegation of MASC's elected and appointed officials, regional student government presidents, and student members of boards of education across the state. Additionally, MASC has exhibited unanimous support of the Lifesaver Schools Program during the 2024 Legislative Session.

MASC calls on the General Assembly to support the mental and emotional well-being of students in Maryland by passing HB612. This bill seeks to establish a program within schools that actively promotes mental health education for students, and the bill further implements opportunities for students and staff to receive Service Learning & Professional Development hours respectively. The Lifesavers Schools Program would disseminate tangible resources related to training in first aid to schools and provide them with access to a mental wellness platform to maximize their physical and psychological health.

The 2022 United States Senate Hearing on Mental Health and Substance Use Disorders called for schools to, "...adopt curricula that incorporate materials about mental health."<sup>1</sup> Furthermore, MASC supports initiatives designed to promote positive mental health and wellbeing in youth and train school staff to recognize mental health issues amongst students and provide support. Accordingly, MASC respectfully requests a favorable report on HB612 from the committee.

Thank you,

Mara Babb - *State Legislative Affairs Coordinator*  
The Maryland Association of Student Councils

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<sup>1</sup> "Student Mental Health Is Overwhelming Schools. Can Congress Help?" by Andrew Ujifusa, 2022. Education Week.