

HB612 Letter of Support - Ways and Means Committee (Education Subcommittee)

Public Schools - Lifesaver School Program - Establishment

Baltimore County Student Councils

Jody Obasogie - Perry Hall High School Student

Chair Atterbeary, Vice Chair Wilkins, and Delegate Ebersole :

My name is Jody Obasogie and I am a student at Perry Hall High School in Baltimore County. I serve in various leadership positions including one of the three Student Workshop Coordinators in the Baltimore County Student Councils. I write to you on behalf of students in Maryland to request a favorable report on House Bill 612.

I have personally witnessed the effect of mental health issues in my peers, with moods dramatically dropping and loss of personality. The school environment can feel, more times than not, mentally and emotionally draining, and when you add the academic pressure, social dynamic issues and personal challenges, the atmosphere can become extremely overwhelming. Without the proper support, school has the potential to become an unbearable place for students and their mental health.

However, with the proper assistance, we can help students like myself feel more supported in their daily lives. Having accessible resources can benefit the mental health of these students. The STUDENTS are calling for our legislators to do something about this crisis.

This bill, the Lifesavers Bill, would effectively work in the students favor by not only providing them with mental health resources but by also naming their school a Lifesaver school. This implication of this program is necessary because students can finally feel as though they have someone who is fighting for them, and that they are not alone anymore in their personal battles. Individuals underestimate the power of support and the bill single-handedly is putting that into direct action.

Please support nearly all of the Education Subcommittee members who have co-sponsored this bill and vote favorably on HB612, as school should be an environment that prioritizes the mental well-being of the students. Thank you for your consideration.