

SB81 26 JPR.pdf

Uploaded by: Amanda Rodriguez

Position: FAV



BILL NUMBER: SB 81

TITLE: *Criminal Law – School Resource Officers – Prohibition on Sexual Activity with Students*

COMMITTEE: Judicial Proceedings Committee

HEARING DATE: January 27, 2026

POSITION: Support

TurnAround strongly supports Senate Bill 81, *Criminal Law – School Resource Officers – Prohibition on Sexual Activity with Students*, currently before the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee. This important legislation would prohibit law enforcement officers assigned as school resource officers from engaging in sexual acts, sexual contact, or intercourse with students enrolled in the schools where they serve.

School resource officers play a vital role in ensuring safety and building trust between law enforcement and students. It is essential that these adults are held to the highest ethical and legal standards—especially given the inherent power dynamics and vulnerability of young people in school settings. SB 81 helps ensure that students are protected from abuse of authority and exploitation by individuals entrusted with their safety.

This bill reinforces the message that schools must be safe spaces free from misconduct and abuse. By explicitly prohibiting sexual conduct between school resource officers and students, Maryland stands with other jurisdictions that have adopted similar safeguards to protect youth. Strong legal protections like SB 81 also strengthen community trust in law enforcement institutions and send a clear message that professional boundaries are non-negotiable.

Moreover, this legislation aligns with Maryland’s long-standing commitment to protecting children’s rights and fostering environments where all students can learn without fear or harm. Implementing SB 81 would help prevent instances of abuse, provide clarity around prohibited conduct, and support accountability for individuals who violate these critical standards.

For these reasons, TurnAround urges the Judicial Proceedings Committee to vote in support of SB 81. Thank you for your attention to this vital issue and for your service to the people of Maryland

About TurnAround, Inc.

TurnAround, Inc. is the designated rape crisis center for Baltimore City and Baltimore County and a comprehensive domestic violence service provider, serving survivors at the most critical moments of their lives. The organization delivers 24-hour crisis response, survivor-centered advocacy, legal referrals, trauma-informed therapy, and prevention education throughout the community.

TurnAround also serves as the Regional Navigator for Baltimore and Howard Counties, coordinating specialized services for survivors of human trafficking. In addition, TurnAround operates Maryland's first residential program specifically designed for children who have been trafficked, providing a safe, therapeutic environment where youth can begin healing and rebuilding their lives.

TurnAround is a proud member of the Maryland Coalition Against Sexual Assault (MCASA), the Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence (MNADV), and the Coalition to Protect Maryland's Children (CPMC), and is committed to advancing policies that protect vulnerable youth and strengthen survivor safety statewide.

For further questions, please contact Amanda Rodriguez, Esq., Chief Executive Officer, at arodriguez@turnaroundinc.org, or Jean Henningsen, Chief Communications Officer, at jhenningsen@turnaroundinc.org.

MD Commission on Women - Support

Uploaded by: Ariana Kelly

Position: FAV



www.marylandwomen.org

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Maryland Commission for Women

51 Monroe Street, Suite. 1034 Rockville, Maryland 20850

Senate Bill 81 Criminal Law - School Resource Officers - Prohibition on Sexual Activity with Students

Sponsor: Senator William G. Folden

Hearing Date: January 27, 2026

Position: FAVORABLE

The Maryland Commission for Women is pleased to submit testimony in support of SB 81, which closes a loophole that excludes school resource officers (SROs) from sexual offense statutes. The Commission supports efforts to protect students from sexual exploitation in schools and recognizes the importance of addressing power imbalances in educational settings. We thank Senator Folden for introducing this legislation.

Sexual exploitation by adults in positions of authority disproportionately affects girls and other vulnerable students in Maryland schools. Current law does not explicitly cover school resource officers (SROs), leaving gaps that can allow sexual abuse to go unaddressed.

By prohibiting sexual conduct between SROs and students under their supervision, SB 81 directly addresses this gap and recognizes the duty of care and authority SROs hold. This legislation will strengthen trust and safety in schools and provide clearer protections for minors.

The Maryland Commission for Women urges the committee to issue a favorable report on this piece of legislation. Protecting students from sexual exploitation is not only a matter of law enforcement, but it is also a matter of safety, equity, and justice for Maryland's youth.

Maryland Commission for Women Executive Director Ariana Kelly is available to answer any further questions at

Ariana.Kelly@Maryland.Gov or 240-338-0591.

SB0081 CPMC FAV JPR.pdf

Uploaded by: Diana Philip

Position: FAV

THE COALITION TO PROTECT MARYLAND'S CHILDREN

Our Mission: To combine and amplify the power of organizations and citizens working together to keep children safe from abuse and neglect.

We strive to secure budgetary and public policy resources to make meaningful and measurable improvements in safety, permanence, and wellbeing.



CPMC
COALITION TO PROTECT
MARYLAND'S CHILDREN

HB0081 – Criminal Law – School Resource Officers – Prohibition on Sexual Activity with Students

Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee

January 27, 2026

Position: SUPPORT

The Coalition to Protect Maryland's Children is a consortium of organizations and individuals formed in 1996 who are concerned about the care of Maryland's most vulnerable children and work together to promote meaningful child welfare reform. CPMC **urges a favorable report on SB0081 - Criminal Law – School Resource Officers – Prohibition on Sexual Activity with Students** .¹

SB0081 seeks to prohibit law enforcement officers assigned as school resource officers from engaging in sexual acts, sexual contact, or intercourse with students enrolled in the schools where they serve. The measure would further ensure that students are protected from abuse of authority and exploitation by individuals entrusted with their safety.

A gap was identified in Maryland's "sexual extortion" and "breach of trust" laws regarding law enforcement officers. Existing Maryland law (Criminal Law § 3-314) already prohibits law enforcement officers from engaging in sexual activity with victims, witnesses, suspects, or people in their custody. However, it did not explicitly include students at schools where an officer is assigned as a school resource officer, provided the student wasn't technically in "custody" or part of an "investigation." SB0081 makes it clear that sexual contact between school resource officer and a student is criminal, by establishing that such contact committed may be subject to a misdemeanor offense punishable by up to 3 years in prison, regardless of any allegation of "consent".

For the reasons above, the Coalition to Protect Maryland's Children **urges a favorable report on SB0081 - Criminal Law – School Resource Officers – Prohibition on Sexual Activity with Student.**

¹ Members of CPMC represented by this written testimony include: Arrow Child & Family Ministries, Center for Hope, Child Justice, Court Appointed Special Advocates (Maryland), Court Appointed Special Advocates (Baltimore County), Everstand, Maryland Association of Resources for Families and Youth, Maryland Children's Alliance, Maryland Coalition Against Sexual Assault, Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence, National Association of Social Workers – MD Chapter, and other individual members of the coalition.

SB 0081, FAV, FCG, OCE, LS26 FINAL.pdf

Uploaded by: Jessica Fitzwater

Position: FAV



FREDERICK COUNTY GOVERNMENT
OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

Jessica Fitzwater
County Executive

SB 81 – Criminal Law - School Resource Officers - Prohibition on Sexual Activity with Students

DATE: January 27, 2026
COMMITTEE: Judicial Proceedings Committee
POSITION: Favorable
FROM: The Office of Frederick County Executive Jessica Fitzwater

As the County Executive of Frederick County, I urge the committee to give **SB 81 – Criminal Law - School Resource Officers - Prohibition on Sexual Activity with Students** a favorable report.

Current state law prohibits a school resource officer from having sexual contact with a student who is under the age of 18. Law enforcement officers are prohibited from having sexual contact with victims, witnesses, suspects, individuals in custody, and individuals requesting assistance from the law enforcement officer, as outlined in MD Code, Criminal Law, § 3-314. However, this current law has an unintended loophole that allows a school resource officer (SROs) to have sexual contact with a student if that student is above the age of 18. Across the country, in the State of Maryland, and in Frederick County, there have been cases of SROs avoiding prosecution because of this loophole in the law.

Under current Maryland Criminal Law §3-307(a)(4), it is a crime for certain persons in positions of authority—such as teachers, coaches, and custodians—to engage in sexual activity with students under their supervision. Likewise Maryland Criminal Law §3-314 makes it a crime for a law enforcement officer to engage in sexual contact, intercourse, or a sexual act with anyone they are investigating, assisting, or detaining, or with anyone seeking their official help (including students at their assigned school), unless the relationship existed beforehand and was entirely unrelated to the officer’s official duties.

However, school resource officers are not included in these statutes. This omission has allowed cases in which law enforcement officers, assigned to schools to protect students as school resource officers, have instead used their authority, access, and trust to pursue sexual relationships with students. The lack of statutory clarity makes it difficult to prosecute or discipline these abuses of power.

SB 81 will close the current loophole and ensure SROs are prohibited from having sexual contact with any student attending the school in which they are assigned, regardless of age. By closing this loophole, the State will ensure that all students have access to a safe learning environment in Maryland schools. Maryland law recognizes the unique vulnerability of victims, witnesses, suspects, individuals in custody, and individuals requesting assistance from the law enforcement officer and extends protections in MD Code, Criminal Law, § 3-314. These protections should be extended to students at schools and institutions where an officer is serving as an SRO.

RE: SB 81 – Criminal Law - School Resource Officers - Prohibition on Sexual Activity with Students
January 27, 2026 January 23, 2026

As a mother and an educator, I am deeply committed to ensuring the safety and well-being of Maryland's students. This legislation is crucial to ensuring all students are able to thrive in a healthy environment when they enter any Maryland school.

Thank you for your consideration of SB 81. I urge you to advance this bill with a favorable report.



Jessica Fitzwater, County Executive
Frederick County, MD

SB0081 - PGSAO.MSAA - FAV.pdf

Uploaded by: Jessica Garth

Position: FAV



TARA H. JACKSON
State's Attorney for Prince George's County
14735 Main Street, Suite M3403
Upper Marlboro, Maryland 20772
301-952-3500

January 27, 2026

Testimony in **Support** of

SB0081 – School Resource Officers – Prohibition on Sexual Activity with
Students

Dear Chairman, Vice Chairman, and Members of the Committee:

I am writing to show my strong support for Senate Bill 0081 on behalf of State's Attorney Tara Jackson and the Maryland State's Attorneys' Association, and to urge a favorable report. Passage of Senate Bill 0081 would prohibit School Resource Officers from taking advantage of the inherent power imbalance between their position and that of the students under their authority by engaging in sexual relationships with those students.

I serve as the Chief of the Special Victims Unit at the State's Attorney's Office for Prince George's County. My staff and I carry an extensive caseload of cases involving the exploitation and abuse of children. Unfortunately, this abuse often occurs in places where children should feel the safest, including schools.

Current Maryland law CR §3-308(b)(c)(1) and (c)(2) prohibit a person in a position of authority from engaging in vaginal intercourse, a sexual act, or sexual contact with a student enrolled at a school where the person in a position of authority works. However, CR §3-308(a)(2) does not include School Resource Officers under its definition of a "person in a position of authority," though it does list principals, vice principals, teachers, coaches, and school counselors.

Senate Bill 0081 seeks to close this loophole by including students enrolled in a school where a law enforcement officer is assigned as a School Resource Officer to the list of persons with whom that law enforcement officer may not engage in a sexual relationship under CR §3-314(e). Since School Resource Officers are required to be law enforcement officers pursuant to

Education §7-1501, this adjustment to the law elegantly serves to protect students from becoming victims within the hallways of our schools.

Senate Bill 0081 is a common-sense adjustment to the law that further demonstrates that our community will not tolerate adults who take advantage of their positions of authority to exploit children. For the foregoing reasons, I respectfully urge a favorable report on SB 0081.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'JLG', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Jessica L. Garth
Chief, Special Victims Unit
State's Attorney's Office for Prince George's County

SB81-School Resource Officers - Prohibition on Sex

Uploaded by: Jessica Morgan

Position: FAV



Bill No: SB81
Title: Criminal Law - School Resource Officers - Prohibition on Sexual Activity with Students
Committee: Judicial Proceedings
Hearing: January 27, 2026
Position: FAVORABLE

The Maryland Legislative Agenda for Women (MLAW) is a statewide coalition of women’s groups and individuals formed to provide a non-partisan, independent voice for Maryland women and families. MLAW’s purpose is to advocate for legislation affecting women and families. To accomplish this goal, MLAW creates an annual legislative agenda with issues voted on by MLAW members and endorsed by organizations and individuals from all over Maryland. [SB81 - Criminal Law - School Resource Officers - Prohibition on Sexual Activity with Students](#) is a priority on the [2026 MLAW Agenda](#) and we urge your support.

SB81- Criminal Law - School Resource Officers - Prohibition on Sexual Activity with Students closes a loophole in Maryland’s sexual offense statute by prohibiting sexual conduct between a school resource officer (SRO) and any student at the school to which the officer is assigned, recognizing the inherent power imbalance and duty of care owed to students.

closes a loophole in Maryland’s sexual offense statute by prohibiting sexual conduct between a school resource officer (SRO) and any student at the school to which the officer is assigned, recognizing the inherent power imbalance and duty of care owed to students.

The proposed amendment simply adds school resource officers to the list of positions covered under § 3-314, ensuring that SROs are legally prohibited from engaging in sexual acts with students at their assigned schools. This closes an existing gap, strengthens protections for minors, and reinforces the expectation that all adults in authority within schools are bound by the same ethical and legal standards.

For these reasons, MLAW strongly urges the passage of SB81.

MLAW 2026 Supporting Organizations

The following organizations have signed on in support of our 2026 Legislative Agenda*:

American Association of University Women-Anne Arundel County
American Association of University Women-Kensington-Rockville
American Association of University Women-Maryland
American Association of University Women-Garrett Branch
American Association of University Women-Howard County Branch
Baltimore County Commission for Women
Business and Professional Women – Montgomery County
Bound for Better, advocates for Domestic Violence and Sexual Abuse
Campaign for Eneshal Galloway at Large Candidacy
Crabs On The Shore
Jack and Jill of America Western Maryland Chapter
Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence
Montgomery County Commission for Women
National Organization for Women, Carroll County Chapter
National Organization for Women, Montgomery County Chapter
Postpartum Support International - Maryland
Prince George's County Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Inc.
Postpartum Support International, Maryland Chapter
Self-Reflections: Social-Emotional, Behavioral and Advocacy Services, LLC
Stella's Girls, Incorporated
SUB&S LLC
The Heart Nest
The Rest Of A Life (TROAL)
Women's Law Center of Maryland, Inc.
Top Ladies of Distinction, Incorporated, Patuxent River Chapter
Unrooted Culture
Women's Commission for Baltimore City
Women's Equity Center and Action Network
Zonta Club of Annapolis

**As of 1/23/2026*

SB 81 SRO MSAA Favorable.pdf

Uploaded by: Joyce King

Position: FAV

Ivan Bates
President



Kirsten N. Brown
Coordinator

Maryland State's Attorneys' Association
3300 North Ridge Road, Suite 185
Ellicott City, Maryland 21043
kbrown@mdsaa.org ~ 301-748-1312

DATE: January 23, 2026

BILL NUMBER: SB 81 School Resource Officers – Prohibition on Sexual Activity with Students

POSITION: Favorable

The Maryland State's Attorneys' Association (MSAA) supports Senate Bill 171 and urges this Committee to issue a favorable report.

Under current Maryland Criminal Law §3-308(a)(2)(ii), it is a crime for certain persons in positions of authority—such as teachers, coaches, and custodians—to engage in sexual activity with students under their supervision. Likewise Maryland Criminal Law §3-314 makes it a crime for a law enforcement officer to engage in sexual contact, intercourse, or a sexual act with anyone they are investigating, assisting, or detaining, or with anyone seeking their official help (including students at their assigned school), unless the relationship existed beforehand and was entirely unrelated to the officer's official duties.

However, school resource officers (SROs) are not included in these statutes. This omission has allowed cases in which law enforcement officers, assigned to schools to protect students, have instead used their authority, access, and trust to pursue sexual relationships with minors. The lack of statutory clarity makes it difficult to prosecute or discipline these abuses of power and sends a damaging message that some authority figures in schools are exempt from the same accountability as others.

The proposed amendment simply adds school resource officers to the list of positions covered under § 3-314, ensuring that SROs are legally prohibited from engaging in sexual acts with students at their assigned schools. This closes an existing gap, strengthens protections for minors, and reinforces the expectation that all adults in authority within schools are bound by the same ethical and legal standards.

MSAA urges this Committee to issue a favorable report.

SB 81 - MNADV - FAV.pdf

Uploaded by: Laure Ruth

Position: FAV



BILL NO: Senate Bill
TITLE: **Criminal Law - School Resource Officers - Prohibition on Sexual Activity with Students**
COMMITTEE: Judicial Proceedings
HEARING DATE: January 27, 2026
POSITION: **FAVORABLE**

The Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence (MNADV) is the state domestic violence coalition that brings together victim service providers, allied professionals, and concerned individuals for the common purpose of reducing intimate partner and family violence and its harmful effects on our citizens. **MNADV urges the COMMITTEE to report favorably on SB 81.**

Senate Bill 81 addresses a gap in Maryland's "sexual extortion" and "breach of trust" laws regarding law enforcement officers. Existing Maryland law (Criminal Law § 3-314) already prohibits law enforcement officers from engaging in sexual activity with victims, witnesses, suspects, or people in their custody. However, it did not explicitly include students at schools where an officer is assigned as a School Resource Officer (SRO), provided the student wasn't technically in "custody" or part of an "investigation."

This bill adds students enrolled in a school where the officer is assigned to the list of protected classes. It makes sexual contact between an SRO and a student a misdemeanor punishable by up to 3 years in prison, regardless of "consent," due to the inherent power imbalance.

In this writer's personal experience all three of her children had friendly and consistent contact with the SRO at their middle school. It is vital that the SRO not use this position of trust in an inappropriate and damaging manor.

For the above stated reasons, the **Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence urges a favorable report on SB 81.**

SROs - testimony - 2026 - MCASA SB81 FAV.pdf

Uploaded by: Lisae C Jordan

Position: FAV



Working to end sexual violence in Maryland

P.O. Box 8782
Silver Spring, MD 20907
Phone: 301-565-2277
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For more information contact:
Lisae C. Jordan, Esquire
443-995-5544
www.mcasa.org

Testimony Supporting Senate Bill 81
Lisae C. Jordan, Executive Director & Counsel
January 27, 2026

The Maryland Coalition Against Sexual Assault (MCASA) is a non-profit membership organization that includes the State's seventeen rape crisis centers, law enforcement, mental health and health care providers, attorneys, educators, survivors of sexual violence and other concerned individuals. MCASA includes the Sexual Assault Legal Institute (SALI), a statewide legal services provider for survivors of sexual assault. MCASA represents the unified voice and combined energy of all of its members working to eliminate sexual violence. We urge the Judicial Proceedings Committee to report favorably on Senate Bill 81.

Senate Bill 81 – School Resource Officers and Sex with Students - Prohibition

Maryland Criminal Law §3-314 makes it a crime for a law enforcement officer to engage in sexual contact, intercourse, or a sexual act with anyone they are investigating, assisting, or detaining, or with anyone seeking their official help, unless the relationship existed beforehand and was entirely unrelated to the officer's official duties.

However, school resource officers (SROs) are not included in the list of persons prohibited from sexual interactions with those they are investigating, assisting, or detaining, or with anyone seeking their official help. This omission has allowed SROs assigned to schools to protect students to use their authority, access, and trust to pursue sexual relationships with minor students.

SB81 adds school resource officers to the list of positions covered under § 3-314, ensuring that SROs are legally prohibited from engaging in sexual activities with students at their assigned schools.

Students view SROs as law enforcement and are easily intimidated by their authority and vulnerable to exploitation. Maryland's law should recognize SROs for what they are: law enforcement, and should prevent all sexual activity between students and SROs.

**The Maryland Coalition Against Sexual Assault urges the
Judicial Proceedings Committee to
report favorably on Senate Bill 81**

OSP Support SB81 final.pdf

Uploaded by: Mary Setzer

Position: FAV

STATE OF MARYLAND

CHARLTON T. HOWARD III
State Prosecutor

SARAH R. DAVID
Deputy State Prosecutor

ABIGAIL E. TICSE - MARY W. SETZER
JOYCE K. McDONALD - BRITTANY DUNKLOW
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STEPHANIE HADDAD
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SUPPORT FOR SB 0081

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee:

We are writing to express the support of the Office of the State Prosecutor for Senate Bill 81. The Office of the State Prosecutor is tasked with enforcement of political corruption and police misconduct cases throughout Maryland and believes that this legislation will help ensure that sexual misconduct by police officers acting as school resource officers can be fully investigated and, where appropriate prosecuted.

The Office of the State Prosecutor

The Office of the State Prosecutor is an independent agency within the Executive Branch of government. The Office is tasked with ensuring the honesty and integrity of State government and elections by conducting thorough, independent investigations and, when appropriate, prosecutions of criminal conduct affecting the integrity of our State and local government institutions, officials, employees, and elections.

SB 81 - Protecting Students from Sexual Exploitation in Schools by School Resource Officers

This legislation adds school resource officers (“SRO’s) to the list of positions covered under Maryland Criminal Law § 3-314(e).

The Office of the State Prosecutor recently created a unit to address Official Misconduct involving special victims. With an uptick in complaints of misconduct involving special victims, we sought a specialized prosecutor and investigator to handle the complexities of prosecuting cases involving people using their positions to exploit victims. In the few years since our Office has created this unit, the complaints involving special victims referred to our Office continue to increase each year.

While we cannot provide identifying details about uncharged cases, our Office can confirm that we have received referrals regarding school resource officers who have engaged in sexual relationships with students who attend the schools to which they are assigned. In many cases, while there may be grooming and/or power dynamics at play, under the current statutory landscape, if the sexual relationship was consensual, although the conduct is abhorrent, there is often no viable criminal charge.

Law enforcement officers are assigned to the important mission of serving as an SRO in order to protect students in schools and SB 81 allows prosecutors to hold SROs accountable who use this authority, access, and trust to pursue sexual relationships with minors whom they meet because of their position of trust. SB 81 ensures that even if sexual conduct occurs outside of the SRO's workday or off school grounds, the officer is held accountable for engaging in a sexual relationship with a student enrolled at a school where the officer is assigned.

We welcome this opportunity to support our colleagues in the MSAA in supporting SB 81. We believe this is important legislation to ensure justice for victims throughout the State and encourage this Committee to issue a favorable report on SB 81.

Sincerely,

CHARLTON T. HOWARD
STATE PROSECUTOR

SRO Sexual Activity_SB0081_CVP_FiniganCarr2026.pdf

Uploaded by: Nadine Finigan-Carr

Position: FAV



Nadine Finigan-Carr, PhD
Executive Director
601 West Lombard Street, Suite 429
Baltimore, MD 21201

TESTIMONY ON SB 0081
Criminal Law – School Resource Officers – Prohibition on Sexual Activity with Students
Committee: Judicial Proceedings
January 27, 2026 at 1pm

The University of Maryland, Baltimore Center for Violence Prevention (CVP) supports SB 0081, which closes a loophole in Maryland’s sexual offense statute by prohibiting sexual conduct between a school resource officer and any student at the school to which the officer is assigned, recognizing the inherent power imbalance and duty of care owed to students. Over the past decade, hundreds of police officers nationally have been charged with child sex crimes, including more than 200 school-based police officers. These officers, including school resource officers, exploit their position of trust to perpetrate abuse, with many incidents occurring on school grounds. This proposed legislation provides the statutory clarity needed to prosecute or discipline school resource officers for their abuses of power in these cases. The amendment simply adds school resource officers to the list of positions covered under §3-314, ensuring that they are legally prohibited from engaging in sexual acts. This closes an existing gap, strengthens protections for minors, and reinforces the expectation that all adults in authority within schools are bound by the same ethical and legal standards.

I am the inaugural Executive Director of the CVP. We are a community informed initiative of the University of Maryland, Baltimore in collaboration with the R Adams Cowley Shock Trauma Center at the University of Maryland Medical Center – the first of its kind. Our aim is to build resilient communities for all through the prevention and intervention of all forms of violence and trauma. We do this in an interdisciplinary, collaborative fashion where we conduct community-based participatory research, provide creative and impactful education, and inform and advocate for policies that strengthen our communities to prevent violence and trauma.

As a woman of color, I have focused on the application of behavioral and social science perspectives to research on contemporary health problems, especially those that disproportionately affect people of color. I am a prevention research scientist whose scholarship has focused primarily on individuals and the environments that support or impede chronic disease prevention or management, injury, and violence -- including sexual violence. In my research, I have found that communities of color are disproportionately impacted by school-based policing and by power imbalances in educational environments. Strengthening this law will help promote accountability, equity, and safety for all students, especially those in overpoliced or under-resourced schools. This amendment addresses a known disparity, thereby building greater trust between students, families, and school systems in communities of color.

For these reasons, the UMB Center for Violence Prevention supports SB 0081.

Testimony in support of SB0081 - Criminal Law - Sc

Uploaded by: Richard KAP Kaplowitz

Position: FAV

SB0081_RichardKaplowitz_FAV

01/27/2026

Richard Keith Kaplowitz
Frederick, MD 21703

TESTIMONY ON SB#/0081- POSITION: FAVORABLE

Criminal Law - School Resource Officers - Prohibition on Sexual Activity with Students

TO: Chair Smith, Jr., Vice Chair Waldstreicher, and members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee

FROM: Richard Keith Kaplowitz

My name is Richard Keith Kaplowitz. I am a resident of District 3, Frederick County. I am submitting this testimony in support of SB#/0081, **Criminal Law - School Resource Officers - Prohibition on Sexual Activity with Students**

This legislation is a priority for Frederick County Council and Executive.

This legislation closes a loophole in the law governing the prohibition of school resource officers (SROs) from having sexual contact with students by treating any such conduct regardless of the age of the student as a criminal offense. Under current law an SRO could groom a student and wait to initiate the improper conduct until that student turns eighteen without penalty when the sexual contact occurs after the student reaches that age. This bill will now affirm that no sexual contact may occur **regardless** of the student's age.

We should extend the protections under current law for students to all students at schools and institutions where an officer is serving as an SRO without this age of student loophole.

I respectfully urge this committee to return an favorable report on SB#/0081.

SB 0081_HB 0329_ Criminal Law - School Resource O

Uploaded by: Trudy Tibbals

Position: FAV

SB 0081/HB 0329: Criminal Law - School Resource Officers - Prohibition on Sexual Activity with Students: Please VOTE TO SUPPORT this bill.

Dear Chair and Members of the Committee,

I respectfully write in **strong support of SB 0081 / HB 0329 – Criminal Law – School Resource Officers – Prohibition on Sexual Activity with Students.**

This bill addresses a critical gap in the law by making explicit what should already be beyond question: **school resource officers must never engage in sexual activity with any students, EVER, but especially those students under their supervision or authority.** Students are inherently vulnerable, and school resource officers occupy positions of trust, power, and authority within educational environments. Any sexual conduct under these circumstances is inherently coercive and exploitative.

SB 0081/HB 0329 appropriately recognizes that consent cannot exist where there is a profound imbalance of power. By clearly prohibiting sexual activity between school resource officers and students, this legislation strengthens protections for minors, reinforces ethical standards, and helps prevent abuse before it occurs.

Importantly, the bill provides clarity and accountability for law enforcement agencies, school systems, parents, and students alike. Clear statutory language ensures consistent enforcement, strengthens deterrence, and affirms Maryland's commitment to safeguarding children in school settings.

This legislation is not punitive—it is **protective, preventative, and necessary.** It reinforces public trust in school safety personnel while prioritizing the well-being and dignity of students.

Also, this bill was sponsored with **bipartisan support.** This bill is NOT about party or about partisan politics. It is about student safety and clear conduct requirements of all school resource officers. How can anyone from either party be against these two very important objectives when they relate to our children?

For these reasons, I respectfully urge everyone on both committees to **vote IN FAVOR of SB 0081 / HB 0329.**

Thank you for your time and thoughtful consideration.

Sincerely,
Trudy Tibbals

