



**House Ways and Means Committee
February 25, 2026**

**House Bill 856: Local School Systems - Educator Screening – Educator
Identification Clearinghouse
(School Personnel Vetting and Hiring Transparency Act)**

****Support****

Chair Wilkins, Vice Chair Feldmark, and Members of the House Ways and Means Committee:

The National Association of Social Workers, Maryland Chapter (NASW-MD) strongly supports HB 856: The School Personnel Vetting and Hiring Transparency Act. It is imperative that all schools are staffed by educational professionals who meet the highest moral and ethical standards, and who do not have a history of behavior in educational settings that poses a risk to the safety of our students.

The Social Workers in Schools Committee (SWIS) at NASW-MD is comprised of front-line social workers as well as their leaders from school systems throughout Maryland, all of whom were screened through a criminal background check as well as through additional screening at the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) prior to being granted a Maryland license as an educational professional. MSDE maintains an independent database of those whose Maryland educational licenses have been revoked due to prior bad acts. These incidents do not show up on a criminal background check, because their hearings and the resultant findings occur in front of an administrative law judge, not in a criminal court.

The current problem is with those whose educational license or certificate was removed in other states after being adjudicated to represent a serious threat to the safety of students, but were not charged criminally, and then who moved to Maryland to work in our schools. Given the current shortage of educators, our local school systems cast an increasingly wide net to identify qualified educators and support personnel to serve our students, and the threat of hiring a deeply compromised individual is rising. At present, there is no mechanism in Maryland to identify and disqualify individuals with such a history. This legislation would provide such a mechanism. The National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification (NASDTEC) hosts an excellent introductory [video](#) about their Ed ID Clearinghouse, where such individuals can be screened out.

(over)

As School Social Workers, our commitment to the safety of our students is non-negotiable. As such, we strongly urge that the House Ways and Means Committee take action to close this loophole by returning a favorable report on this legislation.

Respectfully,

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School Social Worker (retired)

NASW-MD Chapter; Social Work in Schools Committee Legislative Liaison