

**Senate Bill 258: Public Schools - Electric Retractable Room Partitions - Operation Requirements –
Support with Amendment**

Chairman Pinsky and members of the committee –

Hello to all of you who are here today to consider SB258 proposed by Senator Bailey. My name is Sallie Dievendorf, and I am Wesley Lipicky's grandmother. Wesley, a 9-year-old third grader, was killed a year and a half ago at his elementary school in Virginia by an electronic partition in the school's gym area. Wesley had been asked by his teacher to participate in the operation of the partitions and was crushed between a partition and the wall.

Wesley's death has left a hole in my heart that will never heal. Our family is destroyed. I know that there is nothing that I can do to bring Wesley back, but I am determined to do everything possible to see that such a tragedy never happens to another family. To that end, I worked with Virginia Delegate Mark Sickles and others to get Virginia to pass HR1753 which establishes regulations concerning the operation of the equipment and mandatory training of operators. Sb258 is virtually identical to our Virginia bill that passed unanimously. Maryland is to be commended for being proactive in establishing such legislation now...not waiting for a preventable tragedy to occur.

I am pleased to be here today to urge you to pass SB258.