

MICHELE GUYTON
Legislative District 42B
Baltimore County

Ways and Means Committee

Education Subcommittee

Finance Resources Subcommittee



The Maryland House of Delegates
6 Bladen Street, Room 306
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
410-841-3793 · 301-858-3793
800-492-7122 Ext. 3793
Michele.Guyton@house.state.md.us

THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Support HB 1292

Public Schools –Self-Contained Special Education Classrooms- Use of Video Recording Devices

Dear Madame Chair and Members of the Ways and Means Committee,

Thank you for your consideration of HB1292 (with amendments) which requires the installation of cameras in self-contained special education classrooms in Maryland public schools. Self-contained special education classrooms are those which include students who are not fully integrated into the main stream school community, who are certificate track and who are qualified for alternative high school assessments. These are our students with the most profound disabilities. They are also often non-verbal or have significant communication challenges.

HB 1292 has a dual purpose. The bill is being introduced to ensure the safety of vulnerable students and to protect teachers from allegations of abuse that are difficult to prove or disprove. Parents of special education students in public schools and advocates have overwhelmingly supported the bill and so have many teachers. We have worked with teacher groups and MSEA to make sure that their concerns about access to the video have been addressed and to guarantee that the video will not be used for teacher evaluation. Due to restrictions in current Maryland law, no audio will be available and video will only be available to law enforcement and persons directly involved in a reported incident.

Because the systems for the cameras have already been installed in public areas, we expect the installation costs of an additional camera to be reasonable and am asking for a review of the current fiscal note. The amendments to the bill are in front of you and specifically insert the term “self-contained” and add a provision that storage time-lines conform to the current Office of Civil Rights.

I respectfully ask for a favorable report on HB1292.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Michele Guyton'.

Delegate Michele Guyton