

March 4, 2020

Re: HB981

To Whom It May Concern:

I strongly support HB 981, the bill that would require counties to allow therapy dogs in school. I am a school counselor at Silver Spring International Middle School and have seen first hand how therapeutic a therapy dog can be for children and staff in a school building.

We are fortunate to have a therapy dog in school twice a week who accompanies our school psychologist. Through her gentle nature, the dog is able to soothe children who are upset and help them feel safe and more open to counseling. The therapy dog is also sought out by staff in the building, who spend a moment de-stressing with the caring canine.

A therapy dog is an excellent resource to help a school provide a supportive environment in which to learn. Every school should have the support of a therapy dog, and HB 981 can help make this a reality.

Sincerely,

/s/

Elizabeth Becker
School Counselor
Silver Spring International Middle School