HB138 EDUCATION - SEXUAL ABUSE AND ASSAULT AWARENESS AND PREVENTION PROGRAM - HUMAN AND SEX TRAFFICKING

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WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

OPPOSE

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Anne Arundel County Public Schools (AACPS) opposes **HB138 Education - Sexual Abuse and Assault Awareness and Prevention Program - Human and Sex Trafficking**. This bill requires that the age-appropriate education program on the awareness and prevention of sexual abuse and assault developed and implemented by the State Board of Education and each nonpublic school include, for students in grades 6 through 8, material promoting the awareness and prevention of human and sex trafficking.

Maryland schools provide their students with a comprehensive Pre-K –12 health education curriculum that focuses on a student's development of protective life skills and promotes health and well-being. As part of this comprehensive health education curriculum, AACPS students are educated in Family Life and Human Sexuality as well as Safety and Violence Prevention. Students participate in age-appropriate instruction on the awareness and prevention of sexual abuse and assault. This instruction includes age-appropriate instruction on the meaning of "consent" and respect for personal boundaries.

While this legislation is well-intentioned, AACPS opposes efforts by the General Assembly to legislate local public school curriculum or assessments. The authority to establish curriculum and assessments is the domain of the State Board of Education and the local boards of education, the same entities charged with the responsibility to research, investigate, and evaluate both curriculum and assessments. Maintaining this authority with the State Board and local boards allows local boards of education to collaborate with the State and stakeholders to ensure that all students, schools, and school systems are held accountable.

Accordingly, AACPS respectfully requests an **UNFAVORABLE** committee report on HB138.