



TESTIMONY FOR SB0119 EDUCATION – CRIMES ON SCHOOL GROUNDS - APPLICATION

Bill Sponsor: Senator Washington

Committee: Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

Organization Submitting: Maryland Legislative Coalition

Person Submitting: Cecilia Plante, co-chair

Position: FAVORABLE

I am submitting this testimony in favor of SB0119 on behalf of the Maryland Legislative Coalition. The Maryland Legislative Coalition is an association of activists - individuals and grassroots groups in every district in the state. We are unpaid citizen lobbyists and our Coalition supports well over 30,000 members.

We all recognize that the school to prison pipeline exists. So many young people's lives are ruined by a single act that, on the whole, was never really serious. This bill would protect students from being charged under a law that makes disrupting school activities a misdemeanor with potential fine and prison time. Typical adolescent behavior, like storming out of class, becomes a misdemeanor with the potential for fines and prison time. This law is disproportionately used against Black and brown students. 82% of students charged under this law are Black and brown.

Our members understand that school discipline is hard and that teachers already have a hard job, but policies can be put in place at schools that will offer teachers a way to manage this behavior without resorting to putting children in prison.

We support this bill and recommend a **FAVORABLE** report in committee.