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Legislative District 35B
Cecil and Harford Counties

Health and Government
Operations Committee
Rules and Executive
Nominations Committee

Subcommittees

Health Occupations and
Long Term Care
Public Health and
Minority Disparities

Chair

Harford County House Delegation



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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

April 5, 2022

**HB 752-Public Schools-School Psychologist Recruitment Program
Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee**

Chair Pinsky, Vice Chair Kagan and members of the Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee:

School psychologists are an integral part of a public school system. The majority of Maryland counties, however, do not adhere to the National Association of School Psychologists' recommended ratio of no more than 500 to 700 students per school psychologist. As a result of the passage of my bill in 2019, **Public Schools-School Psychologists-Reports**, each school system submitted an interim report on school psychologists in the local school system. The report included the following information: the ratio of students to school psychologists, wait times for student access, and the need to increase both the recruitment and retention of qualified school psychologists.

This year I am continuing my efforts to address some of the report findings by way of Legislation.

HB 752 establishes the School Psychologist Recruitment Program (SPRP) in the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE). It would provide professional development programs to individuals who are, or are seeking to become, certified school psychologists in Maryland. The program will maintain a clearinghouse of school psychologist best practices, as well as communicate and promote upcoming opportunities and available resources to certified school psychologists. The SPRP will provide support to school psychologists from groups that are historically underrepresented among professional personnel in the State.

This bill will create a program to encourage the recruitment and retention of qualified school psychologists by offering expanded professional development opportunities for school psychologists with financial reimbursement for conferences, etc..

The program must reimburse certified school psychologists for attending professional conferences. The SPRP shall annually select up to 100 individuals for grant aid in an amount equal to the certification fee charged by the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP). Priority for awarding reimbursement for the certification fee shall be given to school psychologists from groups historically underrepresented among professional personnel in the State. MSDE shall adopt regulations to carry out the SPR Program.

The amount of students requiring services has risen in the past decade in all categories (suicide, major depression, behavioral and mental health, bullying). There has also been an increase in the number of students that require more accurate assessments for IEPs. When you factor in the added stressors of the past two years that have impacted the daily lives for our students, our school psychologists have become more important than ever.

Our children deserve the best psychologists available and this bill will help in achieving that end.

HB 752 was passed unanimously in the House, and I respectfully ask for a favorable report from the committee.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Teresa E. Reilly", written in a cursive style.

Delegate Teresa E. Reilly
District 35 B, Cecil and Harford Counties