



**Maryland Developmental
Disabilities Council**

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Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee

SB 583: Maryland Center for School Safety – Public Schools – Reporting of Classroom Disruptions

March 8, 2022

Position: Oppose

The Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council (DD Council) envisions a state where people with and without disabilities live, learn, work, and play together. This includes children with disabilities learning alongside their peers without disabilities. Maryland educates more than 112,000 students with disabilities with a variety of services and supports - most in general education classrooms. **With that in mind, the DD Council opposes SB 583.**

WHAT does this legislation do:

- SB 583 requires the Maryland Center for School Safety to establish a website for anonymous reports of public school classroom disruptions and to establish an office that reviews and refers classroom disruption reports to the appropriate school authorities.
- It also requires the public reporting of the types and frequency of reports received and responses given on the Center's website.

WHY is this a problem?

- Disruption is not defined in the bill. Many students with disabilities display behaviors that could be considered disruptive. Generally, those behaviors are manifestations of the student's disability.
- There are already laws about steps to take, including any disciplinary action, when a student with disabilities exhibits certain behaviors.
- It may lead to students with disabilities being singled out in classroom settings by their peers and educators.
- The annual public reporting with identified categories of the types of disruption without context may lead to unnecessarily identifying students with disabilities as disruptive.

SB 583 could disproportionately and negatively impact students with disabilities and their ability to learn in the classroom setting. For that reason, the DD Council opposes SB 583.

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