

February 22, 2022

HB788 – Parks – Child Safe Zone program – Equitable Access to Safe Parks Act

Testimony of Steven Johnson, President, Pimlico Terrace Neighborhood Association

Position: SUPPORT

Greetings Environment and Transportation Committee -

I am writing in support of SB522 – Child Safe Zone Program – Providing Equitable Access to Safe Parks. As the president for the Pimlico Terrace Neighborhood Association, which is located in Central Park Heights, public safety is a crucial element when it comes to the redevelopment of our community. Night in and night out, we hear of tragedies in our city due to violence, and crime, which continually piles on the depressing weight of trauma onto our children, and young people.

This bill will help communicate in a strong way that parks are a safe place for children and families to congregate; creating community interaction and providing a safe haven, for children, family, and the community. Parks, and green spaces, should be a place to come find peace, breathe fresh air, and escape the social ills, which have become norms in our society.

Studies show that children who are exposed to peace, love, and cleanliness, do better academically, socially, and emotionally. Children deserve a place where they can play safely and engage socially, being critical to their growth, as they too will be adults one day.

In addition to seeing signs that park users that the park is a “Child Safe Zone,” park users will also benefit from seeing improvement to parks that deter violence and crime. Better lighting and access points, esthetically pleasing landscaping, and intentionally enhanced security measures, will enhance public safety in these settings and encourage the community to utilize and appreciate our parks, and green spaces.

On behalf of the Pimlico Terrace Neighborhood Association, It would be of great benefit and reward, to our community, our city, and our society, that SB522 is given FAVORABLE support.

Your community partner in safety,

Steven T. Johnson

President- Pimlico Terrace Neighborhood Association