

Date: March 30, 2022

Subject: HB1171 Declaration of Rights - Right to Reproductive Liberty

To the Members of the Maryland General Assembly:

I oppose Maryland HB1171 because it encourages and promotes the same heinous behavior of Etienne K. Kabongo, a Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) bus operator, who was caught on camera raping a 12-year-old special education student on July 31, 2018 (pp. 2-4 of this attachment). Additionally, Etienne K. Kabongo drove buses for 42 Maryland schools. Maryland General Assembly HB1171 is a complete disgrace to the rule of law.

Sincerely,

John Gelo



Office of Communications | Phone: 240-740-2837 | news.montgomeryschoolsmd.org

A Message from Superintendent Jack R. Smith: Arrest of MCPS Bus Driver

August 6, 2018

Dear MCPS Community:

I am writing to inform you about the arrest of Etienne K. Kabongo, a Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) bus operator. Mr. Kabongo, known to some students as "Mr. Steve," is charged with second-degree rape, sexual abuse of a minor, and third-degree sexual offense. According to the Montgomery County Police Department (MCPD), the charges stem from his contact with a student on his bus route.

Words cannot convey my anger, disgust and disappointment in the alleged behavior of Mr. Kabongo. Abusing a position of trust and authority to take advantage of the most vulnerable among us is despicable. This behavior is a violation of our values and policies, as well as the law, and it will not be tolerated.

MCPS staff immediately contacted MCPD when we were made aware of these allegations. We are fully cooperating with MCPD, who is leading this investigation. Pursuant to our memorandum of understanding with law enforcement and MCPS policies and regulations, MCPS has not shared any details broadly with the community until now to avoid prejudicing the police investigation and interfering with law enforcement's ability to prosecute its case.

Mr. Kabongo has worked for MCPS since 2006 as a bus operator. He has primarily driven for students receiving Special Education services at multiple schools across the county during the school year and the summer. A partial list of these schools can be found [here](#).

He was immediately placed on leave when we were made aware of the allegations. Mr. Kabongo will not be returning to our buses or schools.

Our thoughts are with the students and families impacted by this. MCPS has coordinated with Tree House Child Advocacy Center to ensure counseling support and resources are available. Tree House staff can be reached by phone at [240-777-4699](tel:240-777-4699).

If you or your child have any information that may be helpful to the investigation, I ask that you call the Special Victims Investigations Division of the Montgomery County Police Department at [240-773-5400](tel:240-773-5400).

MCPS is committed to the safety of all students on our buses and in our schools. Many buses in our fleet are equipped with internal video cameras, including the bus related to this arrest. We have already taken steps to accelerate our process for acquiring cameras for all buses. Additionally, in 2015, MCPS enhanced its policies and protocols for preventing, recognizing and reporting child abuse in our community. More information is available at <http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/childabuseandneglect/>.

Sincerely,
Jack R. Smith, Ph.D.
Superintendent of Schools

For more information contact the Department of Public Information and Web Services

Phone: 301-279-3853 | e-mail: pio@mcpsmd.org

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www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org | twitter.com/mcps

(UPDATED 8/13/2018) KABONGO SCHOOL YEAR ROUTES (SUMMER ROUTES ON PAGE 2) *

SCHOOL YEAR	ROUTE	SCHOOL	SCHOOL YEAR	ROUTE	SCHOOL
2017–2018	5923	Earl B. Wood MS	2012–2013	5923	Blair Ewing Center
	5923	Beall ES		5923	Rock View ES
	5923	Rock Creek Valley ES		5923	Rock Creek Valley ES
	5923	Clarksburg HS		5923	Cabin John MS
	5923	Hallie Wells MS		5923	Stone Mill ES
	5923	Stone Mill ES			
			2011–2012	5923	Blair Ewing Center
2016–2017	5923	Beall ES		5923	Rock View ES
	5923	Rock Creek Valley ES		5923	Rock Creek Valley ES
	5923	Cabin John MS		5923	Cabin John MS
	5923	Stone Mill ES		5923	Stone Mill ES
2015–2016	5923	Clarksburg HS	2010–2011	5923	Marcia D. Smith School
	5923	Jones Lane ES		5923	Stedwick ES
	5923	Rock Creek Valley ES		5923	Rock Creek Vaslley ES
	5923	Cabin John MS		5923	North Bethesda MS
	5923	Stone Mill ES		5923	Stone Mill ES
2014–2015	5923	Rock View ES	2009–2010	5923	Walt Whitman HS
		R.I.C.A.		5923	Marcia D. Smith School
		Rock Creek Valley ES		5923	Stedwick ES
		Cabin John MS		5923	Meadow Hall ES
		Stone Mill ES		5923	Rockville HS
				5923	Stone Mill ES
2013–2014	5923	Blair Ewing Center			
	5923	Rock View ES	2008–2009	4998	Chevy Chase ES/Rock Creek Forest ES
	5923	Rock Creek Valley ES		4998	Lourie Center School
	5923	Cabin John MS		4998	Watkins Mill HS
	5923	Stone Mill ES		4998	Chevy Chase ES

*** Data for years 2006 to 2008 is not available**

KABONGO SUMMER ROUTES

SUMMER	ROUTE	SCHOOL
2018	S5611	Francis S. Key MS
2017	S5619	Earl B. Wood MS
	S5619	Luxmanor ES
	S5619	Earl B. Wood MS
2016	S5606	Rockville HS
	S5606	Luxmanor ES
	S5606	Rockville HS
	S5606	Luxmanor ES
2015	S5702	Cabin John MS
2014	S5503	Flower Valley ES
	S5503	Strawberry Knoll ES
	S5503	Flower Valley ES
2013	S5604	Cannon Road ES
2012	S5606	Thomas W. Pyle MS
2011	DID NOT WORK	
2010	S4204	Marcia D. Smith
	S4204	Rachel Carson ES
	S4204	Marcia D. Smith