



Ella Ennis, Legislative Chairman  
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Delegate Vanessa Atterbeary, Chairman  
and Members of the Ways and Means Committee  
Maryland House of Delegates, Annapolis, Maryland

RE: **HB 1152** – Student Bill of Rights – Prohibitions on Suspension - Expulsions – **OPPOSED**

Dear Chairman Atterbeary and Committee Members,

The Maryland Federation of Republican Women opposes HB 1152, which would prohibit a public school from suspending, for more than 10 days in a year, a student for “unsafe behavior.” It also requires the County Superintendent of Schools to approve an expulsion of a student from a school.

The bill states: “Unsafe behavior” does not include an act: that the student intends only to be disruptive of a school activity, function, process, or the learning environment; or that is disrespectful to an adult or other students but is nonthreatening and does not physically harm another.” Who defines “nonthreatening”? Who determines intent?

Allowing a student to continuously disrupt the learning environment is harmful to all students and overburdens the teacher. It unnecessarily limits the time spent on instruction and prevents others from achieving the knowledge and skills needed for success in life. Allowing students to continuously act in a disrespectful manner towards the teacher or other students breaks down the fabric of our civil society and can lead to an escalation to more threatening and physically harmful actions.

The Vision Statement of the Maryland State Board of Education states best what our schools should be concentrating on:

*Ensure all students have access to a world class educational system  
that prepares them to graduate ready for post-secondary learning,  
rewarding work, and success in society and life.*

Parents send their children to school for that purpose, not to have the overwhelming majority of students prevented from learning due to the unwillingness of a few to abide by reasonable guidelines for behavior. Yes, children need opportunities to learn acceptable social behavior, but there must be reasonable limits. Data confirms that too many students are performing below grade-level in reading, mathematics, and science. The last thing students need is to be distracted from their academic studies by repeated disruptive behavior of a few students. Please give HB 1152 an **UNFAVORABLE** report.

Sincerely,  
Ella Ennis