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**TESTIMONY ON HB#0472 - POSITION: FAVORABLE**  
**Primary and Secondary Education – Title IX – Policies and  
Procedures (Hear Our Voices Act of 2022)**

**TO:** Chair Atterbeary, Vice Chair Washington, and members of the Ways and Means Committee

**FROM:** Richard Keith Kaplowitz

**My name is Richard Kaplowitz. I am a resident of District 3B. I am submitting this testimony in support of HB#/472, Primary and Secondary Education – Title IX – Policies and Procedures (Hear Our Voices Act of 2022) .**

I wish to thank the multiple Delegates for sponsoring this vital legislation. I am a member of progressive organizations such as Progressive Maryland and Our Revolution Western Maryland as well as JUFJ. I want to tell you why I find this bill and the actions it would take to be both necessary and required.

Our society is undergoing massive disruptions due to the pandemic and the escalation of violence and these trends, along with the psychological and mental health crisis from them, is affecting our schools and our students.

This common sense bill puts schools and parents and students on notice that there is zero tolerance for sexual misconduct committed by anyone in our school systems. It mandates policies and procedures for tracking incidents and how they are dealt with and empowers parents to bring legal action to protect their children from these crimes. It is not onerous on anyone to set expectations for behavior and follow through on enforcing proper actions to deal with the problem of sexual assaults and crimes in our schools.

Every student has the right to feel safe in their schools and everyone connected with the school system as well as parents of students require that peace of mind and full protection. **I respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable report on HB#/472.**