



THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

**Testimony of Delegate Dana Jones  
Before the Ways and Means Committee**

**In Support of HB769  
Student Data Privacy - Protections, Digital Tools, and Student Data Privacy Council  
February 24, 2021, 1:30pm**

Chair Atterbeary, Vice-Chair Washington, and members of the Ways and Means Committee,

I come before you today to reintroduce HB769, which codifies the recommendations outlined in the Student Data Privacy Council’s 2020 report and creates a reporting requirement to increase transparency and accountability.

This bill passed unanimously through this committee last year, with a few amendments that are reflected in this year's version of the bill. Additionally, it passed with overwhelming support on the House floor with a final vote of ([113-24](#)).

The bill updates definitions based on the Council’s recommendations to keep up with current technological advancements. This critical issue is a national priority which has been underscored by the pandemic. The Council found that “since 2013, over 130 new state student privacy laws have been passed, and over one thousand bills were introduced on the topic in all 50 states.”<sup>1</sup>

The bill also reestablishes the Council to help implement the recommendations and continue to study the best practices for student data privacy protection. Protecting the personal information of our students, parents, teachers, and staff is a continually evolving issue. The COVID-19 pandemic has only exacerbated student data privacy concerns as many schools make the switch to remote or hybrid learning environments. According to a national study done by LearnPlatform, on average, school districts have increased their ed-tech tool usage in 2020 by nearly 90 percent from just the previous academic year<sup>2</sup>. As teachers continue to utilize new digital programs to enhance their lessons, it is essential that the companies providing these tools are taking reasonable precautions to protect sensitive data and not exploiting it for profit.

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<sup>1</sup> [Student Privacy Compass. State Student Privacy Laws](#)

<sup>2</sup> [Number of Ed-Tech Tools in Use Has Jumped 90 Percent Since School Closures](#)

Additionally, the Senate's Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs decided to remove the reporting requirement for schools to publish which digital tools are being used. Therefore I am introducing an amendment that would also remove this reporting requirement to ensure the house bill matches what has moved in the Senate.

I respectfully urge a favorable report on this bill.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Dana Jones" with a stylized flourish at the end.

Delegate Dana Jones