

MARYLAND STUDENT COALITION

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TESTIMONY

BILL: House Bill (HB) 165 - Education - Sexual Abuse and Assault Awareness and Prevention Program - Human and Sex Trafficking

SPONSOR: Delegate Johnson, Harford County (34a)

POSITION: FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS

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Wednesday, January 12, 2022

HB165: Favorable with Amendments

The Maryland Student Coalition is an entirely student-led, advocacy group that serves to bring students together to promote education policy reform. Founded in 2020 as a vehicle for advocating for students' right to demonstrate, our scope has since expanded to include more educational advocacy initiatives. You can learn more at marylandstudents.org

Chair Atterbeary, Vice Chair Washington, and honorable members of the Ways and Means Committee. We are writing in favor of House Bill 165.

House Bill (HB) 165 - Education - Sexual Abuse and Assault Awareness and Prevention Program - Human and Sex Trafficking, which requires the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) to develop and implement material promoting the awareness and prevention of human and sex trafficking for students in grades 6 through 8.

The Maryland Student Coalition supports human and sex trafficking prevention education in grades 6-8 as part of comprehensive health education. To stop human trafficking and sexual exploitation, awareness and prevention must be prioritized. Starting this early, with students in grades 6 through 8, will help prevent them from becoming victims and provide them the tools to make others aware of the issue.

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Although the responsibility for making specific curriculum decisions resides with local school systems (in accordance with §4-111(a) (1) of the Education Article, Annotated Code of Maryland) we support the state's authority to ensure consistent and effective implementation of comprehensive curriculum across the state.

The Maryland Student Coalition respectfully requests that a date be included in 7-439 (c) for the adoption of the regulations, however, supports the principals within the legislation, and strongly encourages issuing a **favorable** report on HB165.

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