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Richard Keith Kaplowitz  
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**TESTIMONY ON HB#0495 - POSITION: FAVORABLE**

**Education - Student-Organized Peaceful Demonstrations -  
Student Discipline and Policy**

**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#/495, Education - Student-Organized Peaceful Demonstrations - Student Discipline and Policy.**

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. In my youth, as a student at Winston Churchill High School in Potomac, Maryland I was a member of the Student Alliance. I want to tell you why I find this bill and the actions it would take to be required, especially in our current democracy threatened environment.

The issue of student rights has been with us going back to the late 1960's when I was a high school student. Then, it was a student protest of the Vietnam War. Now, multiple issues are increasingly driving school protests, especially over the health measures for Covid, the banning of certain books that one segment of society fears while another welcomes, and the phony arguments against teaching real history versus the catchword for white fears, critical race theory.

In 1969 the United States Supreme Court was called upon to render a verdict on student free speech rights and how the administration of the School Board in Des Moines, Iowa was dealing with it. In the landmark *Tinker V. Des Moines* the Supreme Court ruled 7-2 that **students do not "shed their constitutional rights to freedom of speech or expression at the schoolhouse gate."** [Tinker V. Des Moines](#)

Every student has the right to speak up and speak out on the issues of the day when that speech is peaceful. There should be little to no interference in those Constitutional Rights as affirmed by the United States Supreme Court. **I respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable report on HB#/495.**