



THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

**Testimony of Senator Jill P. Carter
In Favor of Senate Bill 852
–Education– School Personnel– Training
Before the Ways and Means Committee
On March 31, 2022**

Chair Atterbeary, Vice Chair Washington, and Esteemed Members of the Committee:

Senate Bill 852 equips school personnel with the skills required to recognize students experiencing teen dating violence and provides them with access to resources to aid students in crisis. In so doing, we will ensure that young people are able to identify the signs of unhealthy and abusive relationships. This bill is consistent with previous legislation passed by the General Assembly to ensure that the state’s health curriculum includes boundary awareness, consent, and prevention of sexual and relational abuse.

Senate Bill 852 was born out of the tragic stories of [Kristin Mitchell](#) and [Yeardley Love](#), two young women who were tragically killed by their boyfriends. According to the CDC 1 out of 12 teens experience physical dating violence. Victims of this type of violence are more likely to [exhibit antisocial behaviors, engage in unhealthy behaviors such as tobacco, drug and alcohol use, experience depression and](#)

anxiety, and consider suicide. Senate Bill 852 is needed because it guarantees that our school personnel are able to recognize these behaviors and provide the best assistance to their students.

It is important that we find ways to support our young people and training school personnel to better address the issues that students may be facing will ensure that they are safer, more informed and aware of behaviors that may be abusive to their mental, emotional and physical health. Efforts like Senate Bill 852 that attempt to provide resources and education on healthy and unhealthy relationships can prevent incidents and create an environment where relational aggression and violence are no longer common behavior.

For these reasons, I urge a favorable report on Senate Bill 852.

Sincerely,



Jill P. Carter