

**Testimony in Support of  
HB 515 - Public Schools -  
Active Shooter Safety Drills or Trainings - Requirements**

TO: Senator Brian Feldman, Chair and Members of the Education, Energy  
And Environment Committee  
FROM: Ashley Egan, Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry of Maryland  
Coordinator  
DATE: March 7, 2023

I am the Coordinator of the Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry of Maryland. I live in Prince George's County Maryland. I am asking you to support HB 515 - Public Schools - Active Shooter Safety Drills or Trainings - Requirements. My kids have attended public school since my oldest started pre-k at Avalon Elementary School in 2009. She is now about to graduate from Oxon Hill High School's Science and Tech Program in May.

I still remember the day of her first active shooter drill, because she came home and told me all about it. She told me about how the code words were "Dr. Bruce lost her blue notebook." She then practiced with her two siblings for the next two weeks, just to be prepared. That drill terrified her.

Since then, all my children have participated in many active shooter drills, as well as many situations where the school was in lockdown because of criminal activity in the area. They have discussed which one of them will sacrifice themselves to the shooter so that the others might live. They have sat in the dark in coat rooms and bathrooms and had to think about what windows might betray their spot. It is a macabre and deadly version of hide in seek that they have had to perform multiple times a year.

They say it is just like a fire-drill, but is it?

As a mother, I can't even begin to help them through this trauma, the Columbine High School Shooting was two years after I graduated from college. My kids were shocked that I didn't have active shooter drills when I was in school. They hadn't been invented yet!

I am asking you to pass this bill, to study the effects of these drills on our kids and to provide them support to make it through the trauma that we are inflicting on them. This bill is a huge step in protecting our children. Please pass it.

***Ashley Egan***

7604 Lanham Lane  
Ft. Washington, MD 20744