

JOHNNY RAY SALLING
Legislative District 6
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Budget and Taxation Committee

Public Safety, Transportation,
and Environment Subcommittee



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THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
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Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
Senator Brian J. Feldman
Senator Cheryl C. Kagan
2 West
Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

To the Chair, Vice Chair and Committee Members of the Education, Energy and the Environment Committee:

I express my gratitude to the Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Education, Energy and the Environment Committee for allowing me to address Senate Bill 112. The bill proposes that all local Boards of Education in Maryland and Baltimore City establish a policy concerning student cell phone use. Importantly, it does not mandate the prohibition of cell phone use but encourages State Boards of Education to enact comprehensive policies and I have submitted an amendment to reflect as such.

The establishment of a cell phone policy provides clear guidelines for students and staff, minimizing confusion and fostering a focused learning environment. Such policies, while not imposing a universal ban, contribute to preventing distractions during classes, exams, and other educational activities. Moreover, they address issues like cyberbullying and harassment, creating a safer online space for students.

In addition, implementing a cell phone policy encourages responsible use of technology, guiding students on when and where it is appropriate to use their devices. These policies can also outline measures to address privacy concerns related to the use of cameras on cell phones within school premises. By not prohibiting cell phones outright, the policy allows for flexibility while setting guidelines for communication methods and times. This approach supports the integration of technology into the learning process and reflects a consensus within the community, involving parents, educators, and students in shaping guidelines suitable for the local educational environment.

Once again, thank you for considering the importance of this proposal, and I trust that the committee will carefully weigh the potential benefits of Senate Bill 112 in shaping a positive and effective educational environment for our students.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in red ink that reads "Johnny Ray Salling".

Senator Johnny Ray Salling