

**Testimony of the
Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners
Support with Amendments
Senate Bill 127
Maryland Center for School Safety – Firearm Detection Platforms – Evaluation
(Maryland Firearm Detection Platform Act)**

January 24, 2024

The Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners supports with amendments Senate Bill 127 as a manner in which to create safety in school buildings. The proposed legislation would authorize the Safe School Fund to be used to procure and maintain firearm detection platforms in local school systems.

Unfortunately, the bill’s definition of “firearm detection platform” does not include walk-through firearm detection systems like Evolv Express, which could replace metal detectors at our school doors in Baltimore City. The definition only includes systems like Evolv Extend, which uses AI to identify guns via video stream from on-site cameras. The Baltimore City School Board would urge the legislation be strengthened by making walk-through firearm detection systems eligible for funding. The bill could also be strengthened by increasing the allocation to the fund to account for the new costs of updated technology available for school safety.

Finally, the school board remains concerned by the requirement that school districts use automatic notification features in order to be eligible for the Safe School Fund Grant. The requirement to proactively notify law enforcement may not be beneficial in all circumstances, and ought not to be a caveat for funding eligibility.

For the foregoing reasons, the Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners supports with amendments the legislation and urges a favorable report with the amendments noted in our written testimony.

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