



**Bill: HB 1400 Cross-filed with SB 1032**

**Title: Public Schools - Student Use of Force - Authorization**

**Hearing Date: March 6, 2024**

**Position: FAVORABLE**

**Committee: Ways and Means**

**Moms for Liberty Maryland Legislative Committee requests a Favorable report for HB 1400.**

How sad it is that this bill is necessary. Our public schools are seeing staggering reports of violence and bullying which were on the rise before the Covid lockdowns.

**<https://www.marylandpublicschools.org/about/Documents/DSFSS/SSSP/Bullying/Bullying-Legislative-Report-2021-22.pdf>**

Violence in our public schools continues to escalate.

**<https://www.wmdt.com/2024/02/worcester-co-law-enforcement-put-school-district-on-notice-over-addressing-youth-violence/>**

“Since 2019, Worcester County Public Schools has seen a 67% increase in physical attacks on students, a 171% increase in fighting in schools, and a 32% increase in verbal threats against students. Additionally, WCPS staff have suffered 225% more physical attacks from students.” These statistics are not isolated to Worcester County, but are representative of what is happening throughout the state.

Under current Zero Tolerance policies, victims of violent attacks in public schools are punished equally to the bully just by being in an altercation. This is not just. This bill would require the school administration to investigate these altercations fully so that the victim of an aggressor is not punished solely for being the victim of an attack. This bill would allow a student who is threatened to defend themselves from attack without fear of unjust punishment.

HB 1400 is just a small step in restoring justice for victims of physical violence while in a public school setting. It is cruel and unjust that the victim of a violent assault would be punished by current policy. **Moms for Liberty Maryland Legislative Committee urges a favorable report for HB 1400.**

