

Maryland House Members,

Re: Bill #HB1400 - Public Schools – Student Use of Force – Authorization

Dear Honorable House Members,

I hope this message finds you well. My name is Deborah Dolores Carlson, and I am 65 years of age and a lifelong resident of Carroll County, Maryland. I write to you today to express my deep concern about the safety of our youth in our public schools and to voice my strong support for Bill #HB1400.

As residents and adults, it is our duty and responsibility to provide a safe atmosphere and environment for students to receive an education. Currently, the law does not allow students who are being attacked to defend themselves with force without facing charges as if they were the aggressor. This means that a student who is being harmed has no choice but to endure the attack or try to flee. This is unacceptable.

If a student is put in a life-threatening situation and must use physical force to protect themselves, they should not be penalized with a behavioral record of violence. It is unjust that victims of bullying are treated the same as the bullies themselves. This policy not only endangers the lives of innocent students but also hinders their future prospects, as employers and programs may use their school behavior record against them.

Many children today are afraid to go to school due to the regularity of attacks. This fear leads to anxiety, depression, feelings of helplessness, and, tragically, even thoughts of suicide. We have the power to change this narrative by allowing students in attacked situations to defend themselves with reasonable force.

I urge you to support Bill #HB1400. By doing so, we can provide students with the tools and environment they need to succeed in life, whether that be pursuing military entrance, securing job interviews, applying to college, or engaging in community activities.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this crucial matter.

Sincerely,

Deborah Dolores Carlson Westminster, Maryland 21157  
A Carroll County Maryland resident for 65 years/my lifetime.