

## HB 615: Education - Prohibited Behavior on School Grounds and Property - Application

Dear Chair Atterbeary, Vice Chair Wilkins and all other esteemed Committee Members:

I am absolutely dismayed at the wording in this bill. "Specifying that provisions of law prohibiting and penalizing certain disruptive and threatening behavior on certain school grounds and property do not apply to students who commit offenses at the institution they attend or students who commit offenses at another institution while participating in or attending a sporting event or other extracurricular program sponsored at that institution; and generally relating to the application of provisions of law that prohibit and penalize disruptive and threatening behavior on school grounds and properties."

I don't know about all of you on this Committee, but to me, this sounds like you want to pass a law that "does not apply to STUDENTS who commit offenses (I'm guessing the "disruptive and threatening behavior") at school, either the "institution" they attend, OR "at another institution" (school or other school building or property) "while participating in or attending a sporting event or other extracurricular program sponsored at that institution".

It sounds like you do NOT want to hold STUDENTS accountable for "disruptive and threatening behavior"!! How does THAT help anyone?!! How does THAT help all the students in our schools that are the recipients of this "disruptive and threatening behavior"?! How does passing a law that does not apply to STUDENTS for their "disruptive and threatening behavior" help the hard-working teachers and support staff of these learning "institutions"?!

I, as a tax-paying citizen of Maryland, do NOT appreciate the implication that this legislation has toward the SAFETY of all of our students, teachers and support staff!! I pay taxes so that all students who attend and all teachers and support staff that work at these "institutions" should be SAFE at these "institutions"!! There should never be situations in which our students, teachers, and support staff should feel unsafe. I know that this is not reality in way too many of our "institutions". In my county, I know there are plenty of students, teachers and support staff that do NOT feel safe to be in these learning "institutions". I know that there have been daily fights in some of the schools in my county. I know that there have been way too many bullying situations that are very threatening in my county alone. Therefore, we should be employing many more measures to strengthen the safety of our learning "institutions", not making it easier for these threatening behaviors to occur!!

How do minor children react when there are no consequences for their actions? They are much more compelled to commit those dangerous and threatening actions, because they know that they will not “get in trouble”, that nothing negative will happen to them. Anyone with children knows this! It is the very nature of human behavior.

We should be funding to have more SROs (Student Resource Officers) in our learning “institutions”, as research has unequivocally shown that SROs save lives and deescalate dangerous situations than schools that do not have SROs.

We, as a State that cares about our students, teachers and support staff, should be extremely concerned about what will happen if students realize there are no negative consequences for their negative behaviors. Our learning “institutions” will be even more chaotic than they are now!! There will more than likely be a huge increase in “disruptive and threatening behaviors” over what there is even now if legislation like this passes.

It doesn't matter what your politics are. It is very easy to surmise that this legislation is very dangerous to our students, teachers and support staff! We need safe schools! Our students, teachers and support staff DESERVE safe schools!! And this bill will do exactly the opposite of that. This bill is a detriment to our students and our very hard-working teachers and support staff!! All you have to do is look at the state of our nation. There is a huge increase in crime, especially in Maryland. Especially with juveniles committing crimes!! This should concern everyone, no matter what political party you belong to!!

We must keep our learning “institutions” safe for everyone!! That is the very least we, as a society, owe our children, teachers and support personnel!!

I implore all of you to think long and hard before you vote on this bill. This is important, especially to the well-being of our children and those who work to teach and support them!

Please vote to OPPOSE this bill!!! Our children's lives may depend on it!!

Thank you!!

Trudy Tibbals  
A Very Concerned Mother and Maryland resident