

**FAVORABLE**  
**Senate Bill 26**  
**Education – Public School Employers and Employees – Revisions**  
**(Davis Martinez Public Employee Safety and Health Act)**

**Senate Finance Committee**  
**January 29, 2025**

**Paul Lemle**  
**MSEA President**

The Maryland State Education Association strongly supports Senate Bill 26, which would establish urgently needed protections for the safety of public employees, including Maryland's educators. Senate Bill 26 requires public employers to create workplace violence prevention programs, keep accurate injury records, and be transparent with their staff about safety incidents. To provide oversight and enforcement, the legislation establishes a dedicated Public Employees' Safety and Health Unit within the Division of Labor and Industry, with authority to conduct inspections, issue citations, levy penalties, and develop annual safety reports.

MSEA represents 75,000 educators and school employees who work in Maryland's public schools, teaching and preparing our almost 900,000 students so they can pursue their dreams. MSEA also represents over 40 local affiliates in every county across the state of Maryland, and our parent affiliate is the 3 million-member National Education Association (NEA).

Educators should feel safe in their own classrooms, cafeterias, and school buses, and there are commonsense steps that we can take to prevent threats and injuries to school staff, such as those in this bill. Doing so not only improves educator safety, but also improves safety for students and our ability to retain educators. Across the state, our members repeatedly identify enhancing safety as a priority for improving working and learning conditions.

Like other public employees, Maryland educators currently lack comprehensive workplace safety protections. Senate Bill 26 establishes reasonable standards and proactive enforcement mechanisms to ensure public employers take their safety responsibilities seriously. By fostering a safer school environment, this legislation will help educators and students focus on teaching and learning free of potential disruption and harm.



MSEA supports additional interventions to bolster school safety, including embracing restorative practices and hiring more mental health professionals and support staff. Senate Bill 26 is a critical part of a holistic approach to protecting our students and educators.

We concur with Senate Bill 26 that our public institutions should lead the way in creating and maintaining safe workplaces in Maryland.

**We urge the committee to issue a Favorable Report on Senate Bill 26.**