



**BILL:** Senate Bill 78  
**TITLE:** Juvenile Child Sex Offenders – Juvenile Sex Offender Registry and Prohibition on In-Person School Attendance  
**HEARING DATE:** January 28, 2025  
**POSITION:** SUPPORT  
**COMMITTEE:** Judicial Proceedings  
**CONTACT:** Ms. Ilissa Ramm, Chief Legal Counsel, 301-766-2919

Washington County Board of Education supports Senate Bill 78 to expand protections for all students and staff by addressing juvenile sex offenders and sex offender notification requirements to its educational system.

State law already prohibits those students that are on the juvenile sex offender registry from attending school in-person and enumerates the locations, other than a public school, where such students may receive meaningful access to their education. However, there currently is no mechanism for notifying schools of students who are on the juvenile sex offender registry. Senate Bill 78 addresses a crucial gap in ensuring safety and fairness within our education system. It seeks to expand protections for all students and staff in schools by prohibiting in-person attendance for students that are convicted or adjudicated delinquent of rape or a sexual offense that, if committed by an adult, would constitute a felony and expands the list of reportable offenses.

The issue is not access to education but, more importantly, keeping all students and staff safe while providing a safe and secure educational environment. Currently, school staff must rely on the reportable offense procedures to determine if a student poses a risk to the education environment when charged with specific crimes. The crimes this bill seeks to include are inherently dangerous by their very nature. However, without an effective and appropriate reporting mechanism to schools, the previously enacted law, which seeks to keep violent juvenile sex offenders out of schools, does not provide the safety protections it had intended. SB 78 requires notification to schools of juvenile sex offenders, ensuring that schools have the information necessary to maintain a safe and secure educational environment.

Senate Bill 78 reflects a commitment to safety and rehabilitation by establishing notifications to local school systems to keep violent offenders out of schools while ensuring education options for the specific needs of affected students. It also ensures justice and educational opportunities for all students. Students adjudicated delinquent or convicted for serious sexual offenses will continue to receive education through alternative means while protecting the education environment for students and staff.

Most importantly, by prohibiting in-person attendance for juveniles convicted of serious sexual offenses, SB 78 prioritizes the safety and well-being of staff, students, and the education environment. The presence of students in-person with histories of serious offenses or the presence of students likely to reoffend can cause significant disruptions, anxiety, and potential harm to others within the school environment.

Washington County Board of Education supports Senate Bill 78 because it ensures a safe and secure education environment while balancing the need for accountability, rehabilitation, and access to meaningful education.

*Washington County Board of Education fully supports Senate Bill 78 and requests the Judicial Proceedings Committee to issue a favorable report.*

Thank you.

Cc: Washington County Board of Education Members  
Washington County Delegation to the Maryland General Assembly  
Dr. David T. Sovine, Superintendent  
Dr. Jennifer Webster, Associate Superintendent for Administration and Leadership  
Dr. Gary Willow, Associate Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction  
Mr. Jeffrey Proulx, Chief Operating Officer  
Ms. Ilissa Ramm, Chief Legal Counsel  
Mr. Steve Edwards, Deputy Communications Officer  
Mr. Brian Dulay, Director of Governmental Relations, Maryland Association of Boards of Education  
Ms. Mary Pat Fannon, Executive Director, Public School Superintendents' Association of Maryland