



OFFICE OF THE STATE'S ATTORNEY FOR BALTIMORE CITY

February 25<sup>th</sup>, 2025

The Honorable Vanessa E. Atterbeary  
Chair, Ways and Means Committee  
House Office Building  
6 Bladen Street  
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: Support of HB0951 – School Systems - Reportable Offenses – Alterations

Dear Chairwoman Atterbeary and Members of the Ways and Means Committee,

I am writing to express my strong support for HB0951, which proposes several changes to Maryland's education law regarding reportable offenses involving students which will drastically improve school safety by ensuring that school officials are aware of serious criminal investigations involving students and ensure better coordination between law enforcement and our school system.

This bill will expand the definition of "school system" to include institutions of higher education where primary school students are enrolled in dual enrollment programs, ensuring that all students engaged in learning are covered under the law's protective measures. This bill also expands the classification of "reportable offences" by adding new offenses and acts that would classify as felonies if committed by an adult. This bill is critical for the public safety of our schools, and the precious lives who attend them, because it ensures school administrators and school resource officers have what they need to be fully informed about potential threats, allowing them to take appropriate safety measures.

While HB 951 prioritizes safety, it also maintains important due process protections. The bill ensures that a student's status as a suspect does not automatically lead to punitive action without proper review. If a student is removed from their regular school program or a dual enrollment program due to an investigation, their attorney must be invited to participate in any relevant school meetings or disciplinary proceedings. This provision safeguards students' legal rights while maintaining a fair and transparent process.

This bill prioritizes public safety, transparency, and upholding due process rights. These proposed changes will strengthen our ability to create a safe and supportive learning environment and allow school administrators to make the most informed decisions possible.



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I respectfully urge the committee to issue a favorable report on HB0951. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

*Ivan J. Bates*

Ivan J. Bates  
State's Attorney for Baltimore City

Submitted By: Hassan Giordano  
Chief, External Affairs Division