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Legislative District 28
Charles County

Ways and Means Committee

Subcommittees

Local Revenues

Chair, Racing and Gaming

Chair, Southern Maryland
House Delegation



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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES

ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Testimony in Support of HB1105 – Applicants for Positions Involving Direct Contact With Minors - Required Information, Review Process, and Reporting - Alterations

Good afternoon, Chair Atterbeary, Vice Chair Wilkins and Members of the House Ways and Means Committee. For the record, I am Delegate Edith Patterson, sponsor of HB1105 – Applicants for Positions Involving Direct Contact With Minors - Required Information, Review Process, and Reporting – Alterations.

Protecting the most vulnerable members of our communities—especially our children—is one of my highest priorities. That’s why I agreed to cross-file Senator Dawn Gile’s legislation to strengthen child sexual abuse prevention.

This legislation was drafted in response to growing concerns from parents and community members about how schools handle allegations of child sexual abuse. While a recent Anne Arundel County case remains under investigation, it highlights the urgent need for stronger protections. HB1105 will enhance oversight, improve background checks, and expand safeguards across all child-serving organizations.

Schools and child-serving organizations must uphold the highest standards of trust and safety. While Maryland made strides with HB1072 (2018) and HB486 (2019)—introducing mandatory training, codes of conduct, and employee screening—gaps remain. Policies are only as strong as their enforcement, and without proper oversight, even well-intended laws can fall short.

HB1105 strengthens these protections by:

- Requiring MSDE oversight – every jurisdiction must submit its training, conduct, and screening policies annually, with MSDE reporting on compliance to ensure accountability.
- Mandating CPS background checks – criminal checks alone miss individuals found responsible for child maltreatment without a conviction. CPS checks provide a stronger safety net.
- Expanding safeguards beyond schools – child predators don’t just target schools; they seek employment in daycares, after-school programs, and youth sports leagues. This bill extends existing protections to all child-serving organizations to prevent offenders from moving undetected.

Every child deserves a safe space to learn, play, and grow. HB1105 is a vital step toward ensuring that protection, equipping schools and child-serving organizations with the tools, oversight, and accountability necessary to prevent abuse. I respectfully urge the Committee to vote favorably on this bill.

Thank you for your consideration,

Edith Patterson
Charles County