

Good afternoon! Thank you for allowing me to speak today regarding the Student Protection Act of 2025. My name is Tammy Nobles, and I am the mother of Kayla Marie Hamilton. On July 27<sup>th</sup>, 2022, my daughter was brutally murdered, raped and tied up by Walter Javier Martinez. After this monster killed my baby, he left her on the floor like trash and went to lunch with his half-brother and to Target to spend the \$6.00 he robbed from Kayla.

During the investigation Martinez was the main suspect but the detective was waiting on DNA so he could make an arrest. During the investigation Detective Shoffstall found out that Martinez was a known gang member on the MS-13 list and had a criminal record in 2020 for illicit gang activity. Since Martinez was almost 17 years old at the time of Kayla's murder the Aberdeen Police Department had no choice but to call Harford County child protective services to take custody of Martinez until an arrest was made. Detective Shoffstall was very transparent with CPS stating multiple times that Martinez had to be in a secure location because he was a threat and very dangerous. Detective Shoffstall even ran out to the car of the CPS worker and stated again how dangerous he was so that they understood. Department of Human Services along with that CPS worker put that dangerous individual in a group home with other children and not only that Department of Human Services and the CPS worker enrolled him into high school. When Martinez had behavioral issues at the group CPS moved him from the group home to a foster home without notifying the Aberdeen Police department. Then Martinez was allowed to attend another high school.

Department of Human Services and that CPS worker put children and adults at risk. They allowed this dangerous individual to be in schools and be around other parents' children. Martinez should have never been able to attend school. I am tired of the blame game and the agencies and schools not taking accountability. The children of Maryland and school safety are not being put first, and their lives are at risk. The Department of Human Services stated that they choose the proper placement for each juvenile. So the proper placement for Martinez was in school with other children? We need to do better for our children and schools here in Maryland. The safety of all children and staff should come first, not the criminals. Let's do what is best for every child and pass the Student Protection Act of 2025 and those that are the main suspects in felonies still get their education by attending virtual school until they are either resolved or committed of the crime. We do not need what happened to Kayla Hamilton to happen to another child. Thank you!