

TO: House Committee on Ways and Means

BILL: House Bill (HB) 782 – *Study on Detecting Deadly Weapons in Public Middle and High Schools*

DATE: February 25, 2025

POSITION: Support

The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) and the State Board of Education support **House Bill (HB) 782 – *Study on Detecting Deadly Weapons in Public Middle and High Schools*** with the amendments set to be added by the Chair of the committee.

HB 782 Summary

HB 782 mandates a study by MSDE in improving deadly weapons detection in public middle and high schools. The study will comprehensively audit current security infrastructure, evaluating existing measures and identifying areas needing improvement. It will explore various methods, including artificial intelligence (AI) powered software and increased use of security cameras and metal detectors, to enhance detection and reporting. On or before December 1, 2025, in a manner that does not jeopardize school safety, MSDE is required to report its findings to the Speaker of the House and the House Ways and Means Committee.

Amendments MSDE Supports

This bill has the support of MSDE and the State Board with the following amendments which are set to be written into the bill:

- Extend the report deadline to December 1, 2026.
- Designate MCSS as the responsible agency to oversee the study and audits.
- Include language to exempt study data and materials from public disclosure.

MSDE respectfully requests that you consider this letter of support as you discuss and deliberate **HB 782**. For further information, please contact Dr. Akilah Alleyne (Executive Director of Government Affairs) at 410-767-0504, or Akilah.alleyne@maryland.gov.