

Chair Atterbeary, Vice Chair Wilkins, and Members of the Way and Means Committee,

I am writing to voice my strong support for HB 0137, the “School Safety Act of 2025.” This crucial piece of legislation takes a necessary step toward enhancing the safety of our schools by prohibiting students charged with a crime from attending school in person.

Our schools should be safe havens where students and staff can focus on education without fear of potential threats or disruptions. When a student is charged with a crime, it introduces a serious concern that must be addressed proactively. HB 0137 offers a practical solution to ensure the safety and peace of mind of everyone within the school environment, allowing the legal process to take its course while minimizing potential risks to others.

This bill strikes a fair balance between upholding due process and protecting the broader school community. While every student deserves access to education, safety must remain our top priority. Removing students charged with a crime from in-person attendance helps create an atmosphere of trust and security for all students and staff.

I recognize the importance of implementing this policy with fairness and clarity, ensuring that no student is unjustly affected. However, the intent of this legislation is clear—to put the safety and well-being of our schools first. We cannot afford to take unnecessary risks when it comes to protecting our children.

I urge you to support HB 0137 and advocate for its swift passage to demonstrate our collective commitment to safe and secure learning environments.

Thank you for your time and dedication to this critical issue.

Respectfully,

Jill Ferrara