



Empowering People to Lead Systemic Change

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DisabilityRightsMD.org

WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

HOUSE BILL 1194

Public Schools - Injury Incidents - Requirements for Tracking and Reporting

March 5, 2025

POSITION: OPPOSE

Disability Rights Maryland (DRM) is the protection and advocacy organization for the state of Maryland; the mission of the organization, part of a national network of similar agencies, is to advocate for the legal rights of people with disabilities throughout the state. We have been serving children, youth, and adults with disabilities in our state for over 40 years. DRM is a leader in Maryland's educational advocacy community, working on issues such as school discipline, restraint and seclusion, juvenile justice, and enforcing the rights of students with disabilities. DRM has significant experience representing students with disabilities statewide.

For this reason, **DRM opposes HB 1194**, which would require tracking and reporting of injury incidents in public schools, and for a report summarizing this data to be published on the Maryland State Department of Education Website annually.

Unlike the data on restraint and seclusion referenced in this bill, which is currently collected by MSDE under § 7–1104 of the Education Code, or discipline disproportionality data which would be collected under proposed HB 488, the data envisioned by HB 1194 would provide no actionable information to this legislature or the public.

Data on restraint and seclusion are collected because of the public interest in tracking school staff's response to student's behavior and identifying locations where dangerous practices are potentially overused. Similarly, data on discipline serves to identify staff response to behavior that results in potential overuse of exclusionary discipline. Unlike tracking for restraint and seclusion or discipline, HB 1194 proposes to track not *school staff's response* to student behavior, but student behavior itself. While collecting data on staff responses provides information about where staff may need more training in preventing, de-escalating, and responding to student behavior, merely tracking instances of student behavior provides no actionable information to the State Department of Education or this legislature.

Further, the collection of this data has the potential to stigmatize students whose disability-related behavior is seen as "threatening" to their teachers and peers, and to encourage the unnecessary segregation of these students in overly restrictive settings, contrary to their federal right to be educated in the most integrated setting. For these reasons, **DRM opposes HB 1194.**

For more information or with questions, please contact Megan Jones at meganc@disabilityrightsmd.org.