



SB51 - Public Schools - Self-Contained Special Education Classrooms - Use of Video Recording Devices

Position: Support
Hearing Date: February 4, 2026
Committee: Education, Energy, and the Environment

The Maryland Coalition of Families (MCF) is a statewide nonprofit organization that provides family peer support services at no cost to families who have a child or other loved one with a mental health, substance use, or problem gambling disorder. As experienced caregivers, we provide support, guidance, and hope to people who love or care for someone with a behavioral health challenge and advocate to improve the systems they rely on.

MCF supports HB51 as a reasonable solution to protect children with special needs within self-contained special education classrooms. We asked parents and caregivers we support to weigh in on this proposed legislation, and respondents overwhelmingly support this measure. Many noted that they have children who have difficulty communicating and when they arrive home with bruises, scratches, or other injuries they are unable to tell their caregivers what happened to them. Families feel that cameras in classrooms would not only serve as a deterrent to individuals with bad intentions, but they could also serve as a voice for children who cannot speak for themselves or who are scared or worried that they won't be believed. One mother shared, "So many times I wish I could see what happened when my child comes home and says that things happened, and no one saw it or say they don't believe him." Another parent we polled said that cameras would give her peace of mind because there would be proof to back up any concerns. Cameras in self-contained special education classrooms provide a measure of protection for students as well as teachers. One parent noted that "we need both students and teachers to be safe in the classroom." These families also noted that they appreciate the sensitivity in how the recordings will be used and maintained to protect both children and school staff.

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