

April 1, 2026 – HB 1182 Testimony – Education, Energy and the Environment Committee

Re: HB1182 Public and Nonpublic Schools - Student Elopement - Locative Devices

Position: SUPPORT

Dear Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Reginald A. Lawson, writing to you, as a former caregiver, to express strong support for **House Bill 1182**, which would authorize schools to coordinate the voluntary use of locative devices to help protect students who may be at risk of elopement.

I am a facilitator of a monthly men's caregivers support group. We discuss real-world realities of the risks of elopement during our watch, surrogate caregiving periods, daycare visits, shopping, and even family outings. I emphasize **the passing of time is the greatest risk multiplier** for those that elope suffering with cognitive disabilities. Locating them quickly is paramount!!!

During my caregiving journey with my mother, I employed several options, such as medical alert bracelets and dementia seatbelt covers to inform anyone, who found my mother, of her condition and whom to call. However, those approaches did not address elopement's time-sensitive threats.

My mother favored comfortable sneakers, so I purchased GPS-infused sneakers. This afforded all of us (the family, paid caregivers, daycare staff, search personnel) the ability to identify her attempts (fencing) and actual elopement area, thereby reducing time to find her and lessening everyone's (including search team) exposure to danger. The psychological relief of knowing you can find them as quick as possible is invaluable.

House Bill 1182 allows schools to **coordinate the voluntary use of locative devices for students who are at risk of elopement**, helping caregivers, school staff and other rescue personnel to quickly locate a child if they leave a safe environment. The bill equally establishes **important privacy protections** to ensure information collected through these devices is handled appropriately.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Committee to issue a **favorable report on House Bill 1182**.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



Reginald A. Lawson
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