

April 7, 2026 – HB 1000 Senate Written Testimony – Education, Energy and the Environment Committee

Re: House Bill 1000 - Public Schools - School Mapping Data - Radius of School Grounds

Position: SUPPORT

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

Thank you for this opportunity to submit my written support for House Bill 1000, sponsored by Delegate McCaskill. I present to you from my perspective of a former law enforcement professional including formerly serving as Senior Advisor to The Superintendent of the Maryland State Police.

The most threatening risk for autism elopement is being drawn to water. This understanding by itself is helpful, but not enough.

Water mapping is an essential element in enhancing responders efforts to render aid expeditiously. The most critical element in elopement search and rescue is time. Time the lost person has been gone, time they've been exposed to the elements, and time without a sense of safety and potentially in a state of panic.

Water mapping becomes an intelligence tool in a First Responder's approach to search grid development and priority. The tactic of identifying and responding to high risk areas is a proved best practice.

There may be several types of responses to elopement. Technology is great when it is available, working and applied smartly. Knowing the tendency and imminent threats (sources of open water), during elopement searches, are valuable pieces of knowledge that can focus the target of the search, with or without technology.

Key Search and Rescue Benefits of Water Mapping

- **Advance High Risk Location Identification:** Sourcing and sharing the location(s) of the most dangerous threat areas for an eloper is a priceless investment.
- **Potential Reduction of Search Cycle:** The initial search could be executed by all responders (faculty, students, other resource members) immediately while/ without waiting on law enforcement/fire and rescue to arrive. This saves time by reducing duplication of effort.

- **Smart Application of Search Resources:** Searching high potential risk areas may lead to quicker locating and thereby reducing needed time, personnel, resources and cost.

Water mapping is a critical and simple element in a strategic approach to addressing a highly dangerous situation per the tendencies of eloped autistics members.

All the positive potentials of this approach requires your favorable position to become a reality. I respectfully ask you to help enhance the First Responders' abilities and resource kit by favorability voting on House Bill 1000.

Respectfully,



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