

HB 0014: County Boards of Education - Bullying, Harassment, or Intimidation - Information Collection and Reporting Requirements: Please vote to **OPPOSE** this bill.

Dear Education, Energy & the Environment Committee:

I am writing as a concerned resident of Maryland to strongly oppose **HB 0014**.

This legislation shifts the focus from stopping all bullying and teaching basic respect to emphasizing identity politics and demographic categorization in school discipline and reporting. Expanding reporting requirements can divert time and resources away from direct intervention, counseling, and preventative programs that more effectively address bullying behavior. Schools should be empowered to focus on meaningful solutions rather than increased paperwork and compliance obligations.

My main concerns regarding this bill include:

- **Overemphasis on identity:** It pressures schools to view student conflicts through a lens of protected characteristics rather than addressing bad behavior uniformly, regardless of the motivation.
- **Increased bureaucracy and stigma:** Requiring detailed demographic tracking and public reporting adds administrative burden on already overstretched school staff and risks stigmatizing students based on group identity.
- **Privacy and division:** Publicly highlighting disaggregated data by race, gender identity, sexual orientation, etc., could exacerbate divisions among students and families rather than fostering unity.
- **Ineffective policy:** True bullying prevention comes from strong discipline policies, character education, parental involvement, and consistent enforcement — not more forms and identity checkboxes.

Maryland schools should focus on creating safe environments for all students by enforcing clear behavioral standards, not by collecting and publicizing more identity-based statistics. Our priority should be effective, viewpoint-neutral policies that protect every child without turning schools into data-collection arms for identity-based advocacy.

I respectfully urge you to **oppose HB 0014** and vote against its passage in the Senate.

Thank you for your time and thoughtful consideration of my concerns regarding this important student safety education legislation.

Sincerely,

Trudy Tibbals