



BILL: HB 326

POSITION: FAV - Favorable

COMMITTEE: Education, Energy, and the Environment

HEARING DATE: April 7, 2026

SUBMITTED BY: Maryland Department of Disabilities
217 East Redwood Street, Suite 1300, Baltimore, MD 21202

Dear Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and Committee Members,

The Maryland Department of Disabilities (MDOD) is pleased to submit this letter of support for **HB 326, Education – Maryland Center for School Safety – Anonymous Reporting System**. This legislation would codify the current statewide anonymous school safety tip line, Safe Schools Maryland, thus establishing in state law a consistent and confidential method for reporting threats and concerning behaviors.

MDOD has had a seat on the School Safety Subcabinet that oversees the Maryland Center for School Safety since its inception. We share in the State's commitment to try to ensure that students with and without disabilities can learn in safe environments. Anonymous Reporting Systems (ARS) are an important component of a comprehensive school safety approach.

As noted by our colleagues at the Maryland Center for School Safety, tip lines have been recognized by administrators for their value, with reports indicating they can be instrumental in reducing violent incidents. One study found that schools utilizing an ARS experienced 13.5% fewer violent incidents. MDOD would particularly like to highlight that the ARS is designed to identify problems beyond acts of violence, frequently receiving reports involving mental health concerns, such as depression and suicidal ideation, self-harm, drug use, and bullying. The process guided by these tips (Behavioral Threat Assessment and Management or BTAM) aims to identify students in distress and provide robust support and interventions.

Ensuring the continued operation and consistent implementation of the Safe Schools Maryland Anonymous Reporting System is a direct investment in the safety and mental well-being of Maryland's students. For these reasons MDOD requests a **favorable report on HB 326**.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Carol A. Beatty". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Carol A. Beatty
Secretary, Department of Disabilities