

**Favorable  
Senate Bill 984  
Correctional Services - Private Detention Facilities - Zoning Requirement**

**Government, Labor, and Elections Committee  
April 2, 2026**

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Government Relations**

The Maryland State Education Association supports Senate Bill 984. As amended, this emergency bill would prohibit, notwithstanding any other provision of law, the State or a unit of local government from approving the construction or operation of a building, structure, or other real property for a detention facility by a private entity. In addition, the bill prohibits a private entity from operating or occupying a building, structure or other real property as a detention facility, establishes certain penalties for certain violations, and authorizes the Attorney General to bring civil action to enforce this Act.

MSEA represents 76,000 educators and school employees who work in Maryland's public schools and community colleges, teaching and supporting our almost 900,000 K-12 students so they can pursue their dreams. MSEA represents more than 44 local affiliates in every county across the state of Maryland, and our parent affiliate is the 3-million-member National Education Association (NEA).

Senate Bill 984 is part of a number of legislative initiatives that MSEA is supporting this session to lend our voice to protect students in schools and their communities. The dangerous escalation of immigration enforcement in communities across the country is an authoritarian tactic with little regard for due process and equal protection that threatens safety, civil liberties, and democratic values across the country. Students and educators are traumatized by these actions, and communities everywhere are living under fear. We see the effects in classrooms: empty seats, disrupted learning, rising fear, and growing demand for mental health support. Students cannot learn when they are afraid for their safety or the safety of their families.



Educators have a moral and professional responsibility to keep all students safe, primarily in schools, and to advocate for safe communities for our students and their families. We believe this is more than an immigration issue. This is a human rights issue, a civil rights issue, and a democracy issue.

**MSEA adds our voice to this critical moment that requires a renewed commitment to civil rights and social justice and urges a favorable report on Senate Bill 984.**