



**Testimony before the House Judiciary Committee  
February 19, 2026**

**House Bill 566: Criminal Law – Distribution of Students’ Personal Information – Prohibition  
\*\*OPPOSE\*\***

Chair Bartlett, Vice Chair Davis, and Members of the Judiciary Committee:

The National Association of Social Workers, Maryland Chapter (NASW-MD) opposes HB 566: Criminal Law – Distribution of Students’ Personal Information – Prohibition. We believe strongly that public school students are adequately protected under existing law and have grave concerns about adding an additional inlet to the School to Prison Pipeline.

The Maryland General Assembly has done a diligent job of protecting public school students from electronic behavior that is intended to harass, humiliate, bully, extort, or intimidate them since before the advent of social media. “Grace’s Law” was first passed by this body in 2002 and amended multiple times since then, most recently in 2019. It covers more behavior than the proposed legislation and its penalties are higher. Since its inception, it has served Maryland’s public school students well, providing the families of minors with a legal remedy for egregious behavior that intimidates, harasses, causes physical injury, or creates serious emotional distress if that is its intent. Among other online actions, the law covers the posting of images, posing as another, engaging or encouraging others to contact the target individual, and provoking stalking or harassment.

The members of the Social Workers in Schools Committee (SWIS) at NASW-MD see these dynamics play out in the schools regularly and are interested in protecting those who are targeted by such behavior as well as those who are accused of engaging in it. Sadly, with the advent of social media and the political polarization that currently characterizes our country, such behavior can be more toxic, explode exponentially, and cause almost immediate and serious distress to those who are targeted. Doxxing is malignant bullying on steroids.

We understand the intention of this bill and fully support postsecondary students’ desire to have legal remedies available when such behavior occurs. But for the reasons stated above, **we respectfully suggest that amending the existing law to so that postsecondary students can access current remedies under Grace’s Law might be a better solution.**

We don’t need an additional legal option for our public school students when the one in place is adequate. As such, we ask that the House Judiciary Committee return an unfavorable report.

Respectfully,

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