

MIKE GRIFFITH
Legislative District 35A
Cecil and Harford Counties

Ways and Means Committee

Subcommittees

Early Childhood and
Special Education

Revenues



The Maryland House of Delegates
6 Bladen Street, Room 423
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
410-841-3444
800-492-7122 Ext. 3444
Mike.Griffith@house.maryland.gov

THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

H.B. 0123 – School Systems – Reportable Offenses – Alterations

Esteemed Members of the House Ways and Means Committee and the House Judiciary Committee:

For the record, my name is Delegate Mike Griffith, and I am respectfully requesting a favorable report on H.B. 123: *School Systems – Reportable Offenses – Alterations*.

Under current Maryland law, school systems are notified when a student is arrested for certain serious offenses that occur off school property. While this framework is well intentioned, experience has shown that gaps remain, particularly as student enrollment patterns evolve and when required notifications fail to occur. These gaps can leave school officials without critical information necessary to ensure student safety and continuity of educational services.

H.B. 123 is a targeted, thoughtful update to existing law that strengthens communication while maintaining discretion and due process. The bill addresses these issues in three important ways.

First, H.B. 123 updates the definition of school system to include institutions and programs of higher education in which a student is enrolled as part of a dual enrollment program. Students who participate in dual enrollment regularly move between secondary schools and higher education settings. Ensuring that appropriate officials in both environments are operating with the same safety-related information is essential to protecting students and maintaining secure learning environments.

Second, the bill updates the list of reportable offenses to reflect serious conduct that poses legitimate safety concerns. These updates include certain sexual offenses, such as the manufacturing or distribution of child pornography when the victim does not have knowledge of or does not consent, as well as threats of mass violence, stalking, visual surveillance with prurient intent, revenge porn, and other acts that would constitute a felony if committed by an adult. These additions ensure that the law keeps pace with the types of offenses that directly impact school safety and student well-being.

Finally, H.B. 123 addresses a critical breakdown that can occur in the notification process. Under current law, law enforcement agencies are required to notify school officials following an arrest for a reportable offense. However, if that notification does not occur, there is no clear backstop to ensure schools receive the information. H.B. 123 authorizes the State's Attorney, at their discretion, to provide that notification when it has been determined that law enforcement did not

do so. This provision closes a loophole in the chain of communication while preserving appropriate discretion and confidentiality.

Taken together, these changes strengthen coordination among law enforcement, prosecutors, and school systems in a manner that is appropriate, discreet, and focused on safety. Importantly, H.B. 123 does not mandate disciplinary action, alter due process protections, or require changes to a student's educational placement. Rather, it ensures that school officials have access to information necessary to make informed decisions regarding supervision, programming, and student support.

In closing, I believe we can all agree that our children's safety is paramount and that this is achieved, in part, by ensuring that a limited group of appropriate individuals are properly informed so they can determine what is best for all students and keep safety as the supreme focus.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mike Griffith", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Delegate Mike Griffith
District 35A, Cecil and Harford Counties
Vice Chair, Maryland Veterans Caucus, Maryland General Assembly-House of Delegates