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Judiciary Committee



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The Maryland House of Delegates
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

March 10, 2026

The Honorable Delegate Jheanelle K. Wilkins
131 Taylor House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

SPONSOR TESTIMONY- HB1418 Public and Nonpublic Schools - Employing Individuals Charged With Crimes - Prohibition

Dear Chair Wilkins, Vice Chair Feldmark and members of the House Ways and Means Committee,

HB1418 closes a critical safety gap by prohibiting schools from hiring or retaining individuals with active charges for serious crimes, including violence, sexual abuse, and felony drug distribution. Additionally, the bill mandates that school contracts require third-party contractors and subcontractors to adhere to these same standards when assigning personnel to work on school premises with access to students.

The primary purpose of this bill is to ensure that our schools remain safe environments for children. Prohibiting the employment of individuals currently facing charges for significant crimes addresses risks before a final conviction. The bill requires employees to notify their employer within two business days of being charged with a covered offense. Failure to provide this notice leads to a five-year prohibition on rehire; this provides a necessary accountability mechanism.

This legislation balances student safety with the due process rights of the accused. If a charge ends in an acquittal, dismissal, or *nolle prosequi*, the school is not barred from hiring or rehiring the individual.

For these reasons, I urge a favorable report for HB1418 to strengthen our background check standards and protect students across Maryland.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Lauren C. Arikan".

Delegate Lauren C. Arikan