

SB928 - County Boards of Education - Student Electronic Communication Device Use Policy - Establishment  
(Maryland Phone-Free Schools Act)

Written Testimony (Favorable)

Submitted By: Lindsay Unger

Dear Chair Wilkins, Vice Chair Feldmark, and members of the W&M Committee,

I am a parent in Howard County with two children in the public school district. To be concise, I want to ask that you please **keep SB928 as is, such that the language strikes out the instructional use exception entirely** (page 3, lines 18-19). It would be *completely inequitable* for any school-based lesson to require students to use their personal devices as many parents, including myself, have no intention of equipping their students with smart devices for the majority of their childhood. Any technology required for instruction should be provided by the district. Even optional use to supplement a lesson completely undermines the intention of the bill and, again, creates an inequitable scenario. Please make sure this bill passes with ONLY exceptions for IEP and 504 accommodations.

IF it is the intention of the House and Senate to collaborate on a final bill, I ask that you please consider adjusting the definition of "Store" to mean "off the person". This is the original language in Boaf's bill. It still gives the LEAs flexibility and makes sure that students are not carrying their phones in their pockets where they can feel the vibration or easily peek at it. As we learned in these ground breaking social media trials this month, cell phone use is synonymous with social media use and these algorithms are highly addictive. If a student is able to have their device in their pocket, their urge to use them will be insurmountable. We have to take all the facts into consideration when addressing this public health crisis.

Please help ensure a strong bill passes! SB928 is VERY strong as is and should only be amended if the "Store" definition is further clarified, which would strengthen the bill. Please do not adapt the language in HB525 that makes exceptions for instructional use.

Thank you for your consideration,

Lindsay Unger