

HB 1545: Frederick County - Special Education Video and Audio Recording Program - Established: Please vote to **SUPPORT** this bill.

Dear Ways & Means Committee:

I am a resident of Frederick County, Maryland, and I am writing to strongly urge you to **SUPPORT HB 1545** during committee consideration or floor votes.

HB 1545 would **establish a pilot program** in Frederick County allowing parents or guardians of students receiving special education services to request video and audio recording of their child's special education classroom or related service sessions (with appropriate safeguards for privacy and safety). Recordings would be for parental/guardian use only, limited to the student's participation, and subject to review with school staff.

Parents of children with IEPs or 504 plans often struggle to fully understand what is happening during specialized instruction, accommodations, or behavioral interventions—especially when their child has communication challenges, sensory needs, or cannot reliably describe their day. **Permitting optional, parent-requested recording provides critical transparency, helps ensure services are being delivered as promised, allows parents to better advocate for their child, and can reduce misunderstandings or disputes between families and schools, especially after the DOJ had to launch an investigation into incidents that occurred to special education students in Frederick County Public Schools.**

The bill is narrowly tailored as a pilot in Frederick County, includes safety and privacy protections, and requires an evaluation of outcomes—making it **a responsible, evidence-based approach rather than a statewide mandate**. It empowers parents, promotes accountability in special education delivery, **and supports the shared goal of giving every student the best possible education in the least restrictive environment and provides the accountability that so many parents needed after the incidents that sparked the DOJ investigation.**

For these reasons, I respectfully ask you to **vote in favor of HB 1545** and help launch this important pilot program to improve transparency and trust in special education services in Frederick County.

Thank you for your time and thoughtful consideration of this critical child advocacy and special education issue.

Sincerely,

Trudy Tibbals