

**Written Testimony of Martha Moked**  
**March 10, 2026**  
**HB1545**  
**Support – Frederick County Special Education**  
**Video and Audio Recording Program**

My name is Martha Moked, and I would like to begin by thanking the Ways and Means Committee for taking the time to read my written testimony. I am writing in support of House Bill 1545, which would require the Frederick County Board of Education to establish the Frederick County Special Education Video and Audio Recording Program. I feel that it is critical to implement this law, in order to protect special education students and give their parents a way to find answers when they believe an adverse incident has affected their special needs child, sometimes a nonverbal child, at school.

While my children were in elementary school, I substituted in special education classrooms at their school for two years. I worked with some amazing teachers and instructional assistants, who cared for the students with compassion and respect, but I also worked with some teachers and instructional assistants who did not. I witnessed one special education teacher in particular, along with an assistant in his classroom, who mistreated students in his class year after year, even after being told that his behavior had been reported to the school district and school principal. These abusive behaviors included slapping and pulling the students, yelling in their faces, using racial slurs, mocking them, withdrawing food, and threatening them with things that he knew terrified them. Most of his students were nonverbal or students who, if verbal, would not have the cognitive ability to tell their parents about the way they had been treated in class. Remember, this was in an elementary school and the children in this class were 7- and 8-year-olds, whose parents entrusted the school and this man with their special needs children. They believed their children were being treated with kindness and compassion. I cannot imagine being one of these children, being treated this way, and being unable to tell anyone. These children understand what is happening to them but are not able verbalize it.

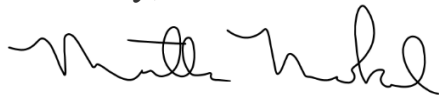
A small group of us, including several instructional assistants and parents, reported his behavior to Child Protective Services, the Sheriff's Department, Frederick County Public Schools, the Board of Education, and Maryland Department of Education, but no one held this teacher accountable for his mistreatment of his students. After an investigation and taking the testimony of 7 witnesses confirming this behavior, the superintendent made the final decision to leave him in the classroom. If there had been video footage, the teacher, principal, and school district could not have denied the abusive behavior that had occurred towards the students.

In addition, I have several friends who are parents of nonverbal students and their children have come home from school with red handprints on their backs or red marks on their skin. When they asked the respective schools what had occurred, neither the teacher nor the school administration could give these parents an explanation. Also, in light of the recent arrest of a special education instructional assistant in Frederick County and his alleged sexual abuse of special needs students, Maryland needs to be on the right side of this and implement this bill, just as several other states have.

I fully support this bill and believe if this bill is passed, it will give parents, school staff, and boards of education a tool that can be used to protect our most vulnerable students. Please be the voice of these students and vote yes in favor of this bill.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Martha Moked', with a stylized, cursive script.

Martha Moked  
2795 Washington Street  
Adamstown, MD 21710