



March 2, 2026

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House Ways and Means Committee
130 Taylor House Office Building
131 Taylor House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Bill: House Bill 1046 – School and School-Sponsored Activities - Report of Suspected Abuse or Neglect - Parental Notification

Position: Support

Dear Chair Wilkins, Vice Chair Feldmark, and Members of the Committee:

The Maryland Psychological Association (MPA), which represents over 1,000 doctoral-level psychologists throughout the state, is writing in SUPPORT of House Bill 1046 - School and School-Sponsored Activities - Report of Suspected Abuse or Neglect - Parental Notification, which will provide timely notice to parents of abuse/neglect episodes affecting their children. It is essential that parents be informed of such episodes as soon as possible.

School system employees are mandated reporters of abuse and neglect of the children in their care, with clearly spelled-out procedures for timely reporting; they receive required training on these procedures every year. The state has long recognized that children can be seriously adversely impacted both physically and emotionally by abuse and neglect. The well-known ACES study showed years ago that serious adverse events in a child's life can have a lifelong negative impact on development, health, and functioning as an adult.

Schools are vital links in addressing child abuse and neglect. Victims often require sensitive care, support, and treatment in multiple settings in order to address the impact, and parents have to be included in the recovery process. This bill very sensibly requires timely parental notification to enable parents to be engaged from the start in their child's recovery. The bill makes a clear and appropriate exception for cases where it is a parent who is alleged to have committed the abuse or neglect.

Thank you for considering our comments on HB 1046. If we can provide any additional information or be of any assistance, please do not hesitate to contact the Chair of MPA's Legislative Committee, Dr. Stephanie Olarte, at mpalegislativcommittee@gmail.com.

Respectfully submitted,

Stephanie Wolf, JD, Ph.D.
Stephanie Wolf, JD, Ph.D.
President

Stephanie Olarte, Ph.D.
Stephanie Olarte, Ph.D.
Chair, MPA Legislative Committee

cc: Barbara Brocato & Dan Shattuck, MPA Government Affairs