



## **HB373 EDUCATION - CHILD ABUSE AND SEXUAL MISCONDUCT PREVENTION - HIRING EMERGENT EMPLOYEES**

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WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

### **SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENTS**

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Anne Arundel County Public Schools (AACPS) supports with amendments **HB373 Education - Child Abuse and Sexual Misconduct Prevention - Hiring Emergent Employees**. This bill authorizes a local board of education or nonpublic school to hire an applicant as an emergent employee for up to 60 days pending a specified review of information and records regarding an individual's employment history, as required under current law for applicants who will have direct contact with minors.

AACPS greatly appreciates this legislation as it addresses several concerns related to the 2019 law that required employers to conduct a much more comprehensive background check of applicants who will have direct contact with students. While AACPS supported the 2019 law, it has resulted in significantly increased workloads and a major hiring backlog for AACPS and school systems across the State. HB373 addresses many of the issues we have encountered.

The employee in the new "emergent employee" category would be able to begin working immediately pending the results of the employer history review, and would have more limited causes of action to dispute their dismissal based on a negative finding based on input from a past employer. The bill also provides additional protections and assurances before placing the "emergent employee," and limits any such placement to 60 days. In addition, the provision in the bill that allows local school systems to use the prior employment history reviews of other local schools in the State will be extremely helpful in speeding up the hiring process and cutting back on our existing hiring backlog. Finally, the 10-year employment history look-back will prove helpful with the amount of time it takes to contact previous employers.

While we appreciate the proposed amendments to the law, AACPS proposes an additional amendment for consideration. We recommend that the bill be further amended to authorize MSDE to maintain a database that local school systems can access to obtain prior employment history reviews.

Accordingly, AACPS respectfully requests a **FAVORABLE** committee report with the proposed amendments on HB373.