

**MICHELE GUYTON**  
*Legislative District 42B*  
Baltimore County

Ways and Means Committee

Education Subcommittee

Finance Resources Subcommittee



The Maryland House of Delegates  
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**THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES**  
**ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401**

February 10, 2021

**In Support of HB 715 – Public Schools – Self-Contained Special Education Classrooms – Use of Video – Recording Devices**

Dear Madam Chair and Members of the Ways and Means Committee,

Thank you for your consideration of HB715 which requires the installation of cameras in self-contained special education classrooms in Maryland public schools. Self-contained special education classrooms are those which include students who are not fully integrated into the main stream school community, who are certificate track and who are qualified for alternative high school assessments. These are our students with the most profound disabilities. They are also often non-verbal or have significant communication challenges.

HB 715 has a dual purpose. The bill is being introduced to ensure the safety of vulnerable students and to protect teachers from allegations of abuse that are difficult to prove or disprove. Parents of special education students in public schools and advocates have overwhelmingly supported the legislation and so have many teachers. We have worked with teacher groups and MSEA to make sure that their concerns about access to the video have been addressed and to guarantee that the video will not be monitored without cause and will not be used for teacher evaluation. In addition, non-affected students will be redacted from any video viewed to protect their identity. Due to restrictions in current Maryland law, no audio will be available and video will only be available to law enforcement and persons directly involved in a reported incident to protect confidentiality.

I respectfully ask for a favorable report on HB715.

Sincerely,

Delegate Michele Guyton