

February 7, 2022

Dear Members of the Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee,

I am writing in support of Senate Bill 0577(HB0226) which would require each Board of Education in Maryland to install video cameras in special education classrooms. I feel it is critical to implement this law in order to protect special education students and give their parents a way to receive answers when they believe an adverse incident has affected their child.

I worked as a Special Education Assistant for 13 years with Frederick County Public Schools. During that time, I was assigned to work for 5 months in a class with all special education students. I observed numerous egregious actions towards these students. It ranged from verbal abuse, physical abuse, taunting and racial slurs. This behavior was brought to the attention of the principal, Child Protective Services, the sheriff's department, and Frederick County Public Schools Accountability Department. Unfortunately, nothing was done except to move this teacher from school to school. This particular teacher is currently assigned to work one on one with special education students. If a camera were in the room, perhaps this would not have occurred. At the very least, it would have been evidence that it did occur. Thank you for considering this bill which would protect children who are unable to defend or protect themselves.

Sincerely,

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