



**BILL NO:** Senate Bill 852  
**TITLE:** Education - County Boards of Education - Health Educator Position  
**COMMITTEE:** Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs  
**HEARING DATE:** March 8, 2022  
**POSITION:** **SUPPORT**

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The Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence (MNADV) is the state domestic violence coalition that brings together victim service providers, allied professionals, and concerned individuals for the common purpose of reducing intimate partner and family violence and its harmful effects on our citizens. **MNADV urges the Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee to issue a favorable report on SB 852.**

Senate Bill 852 requires each county board of education to create a health educator position to oversee the implementation of age-appropriate health education instruction and to gather detailed data regarding the operation and effectiveness of health education instruction in public schools in the county.

The ultimate objective for MNADV is to prevent intimate partner violence from occurring rather than intervening once it already occurred. A multi-pronged approach must be employed to achieve this goal including education on healthy relationships in schools. Just this session MNADV supported two bills designed to teach aspects and awareness of health education. HB 165 passed the House chamber and requires an age-appropriate education program for students in grades 6 through 8 on the awareness and prevention of human and sex trafficking. HB 194 requires age-appropriate instruction on the risks of sexting as part of the Family Life and Human Sexuality curriculum.

The CDC states that “[s]ocial-emotional learning programs for youth promote expectations for mutually respectful, caring, non-violent relationships among young people and work with youth to help them develop social-emotional skills such as empathy, respect, and healthy communication and conflict resolution skills.”<sup>1</sup> Creating a health educator position is critical to the effective implementation of the Maryland State Framework for Comprehensive Health Education as well as any additional education requirements. Gathering data and regarding the education will also help assess if the education offered is sufficient or if changes must be made. MNADV believes that a health educator position will further the objective of primary prevention.

For the above stated reasons, the **Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence urges a favorable report on SB 852.**

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/ipv-technicalpackages.pdf>