

**Testimony\_JPC\_SB0852\_LR2886 (1).pdf**

Uploaded by: Jill Carter

Position: FAV



THE SENATE OF MARYLAND  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

**Testimony of Senator Jill P. Carter  
In Favor of Senate Bill 852  
–Education -County Boards of Education -Health Educator Position-  
Before the Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee  
On March 8, 2022**

**Chairman Pinsky, Vice Chair Kagan, and Esteemed Members of the Committee:**

**Senate Bill 852 seeks to establish a health educator leadership position to oversee the implementation of a comprehensive, skills-based health education. It is consistent with previous legislation passed by the General Assembly to ensure that the state’s health curriculum includes boundary awareness, consent, and prevention of sexual and relational abuse. The bill would require the oversight needed to ensure that the health curriculum is monitored and evaluated by a professional with expertise in the health education field.**

**According to the Maryland State Department of Education, only 11 of 24 school systems in the state have a health education leader who has a certification in health education. This makes little sense. Health education addresses nuanced and complex topics such as violence prevention, mental and emotional health, family life, human sexuality, substance use prevention, disease prevention, and healthy eating. Our teachers, who are asked to do a herculean job, need the support**

of an expert on how to teach health education safely, effectively, and appropriately.

It is important that we find ways to support our children as we emerge from the Covid-19 pandemic. Health education provides them with the skills and habits they need to be productive, thriving adults. The data shows that [students who receive comprehensive health education make safer, more informed and less destructive choices](#); they eat healthier, have better quality sleep, and are more physically active. Further still, these children tend to be stronger communicators; and they are more aware of behaviors that support their mental and emotional health, including identifying and seeking help from trusted adults. In order for comprehensive health education to be impactful, a professional needs to monitor and evaluate it for success, which is what this bill will help ensure.

Given this, I ask the committee to give a favorable report on Senate Bill 852.

Sincerely,



Jill P. Carter

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Uploaded by: Lea Jaspers

Position: FAV



THE SENATE OF MARYLAND  
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**Testimony of Senator Jill P. Carter**  
**In Favor of Senate Bill 852 –Education -County Boards of Education**  
**-Health Educator Position-**  
**Before the Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee**  
**On March 8, 2022**

**Chairman Pinsky, Vice Chair Kagan, and Esteemed Members of the Committee:**

**Senate Bill 852 seeks to establish a health educator position to oversee the implementation of healthy relationship education in schools throughout Maryland. SB 852 is consistent with previous legislation that the MGA has approved to develop education on the awareness and prevention of sexual and relational abuse, assault and family and human sexuality.**

**The first step toward having healthy relationships is learning to recognize the difference between unhealthy and healthy behavior. By introducing such concepts to children when they are young, we can give them skills that will prevent the likelihood of them entering abusive relationships.**

**SB 852 requires that all county boards ensure that certified health educators or certified teachers who each year complete the required hours and credits teach age-appropriate health education in all schools in the county. Additionally, the data or reports should be submitted as applicable to the health educator at the state level.**

**SB 852 follows the Blueprint for Maryland's Future. It serves to continue to provide an innovative approach to educating students in Maryland. By providing age-appropriate health and relationship education by certified personnel, SB 852 seeks to accelerate student outcomes and improve the overall education in Maryland. I believe that this bill will help to resolve some of the mental health issue that our children have experienced due the difficult changes in education brought on by the pandemic.**

**Our State needs this Bill to be approved. It is not onerous to our county boards. This Bill succinctly follows and complements previous legislation regarding health and relationship education created to help and save our children.**

**I ask for this committee's favorable consideration and vote for SB 852.**

**Sincerely,**

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jill P. Carter". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped initial "J" and a distinct "P" and "C".

**Jill P. Carter**

**SB 852\_MNADV\_FAV.pdf**

Uploaded by: Melanie Shapiro

Position: FAV





**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>

# **SB 852.Health Educator Position.pdf**

Uploaded by: John Woolums

Position: UNF

**BILL:** Senate Bill 852  
**TITLE:** Education - County Boards of Education - Health Educator Position  
**DATE:** March 8, 2022  
**POSITION:** OPPOSE  
**COMMITTEE:** Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs  
**CONTACT:** John R. Woolums, Esq.

The Maryland Association of Boards of Education (MABE) opposes Senate Bill 852, which would mandate that each county board of education create and fund a “health educator position” within the school system.

MABE generally opposes efforts by the General Assembly to legislate the state-wide creation of positions in local school systems, especially without additional adequate funding to secure those positions. MABE’s opposition to this bill does not rest on an evaluation of the merits of creating any specified position within a local school system, certainly not that of a staff person responsible for overseeing the ever-expanding realm of health education. Rather, MABE generally opposes statutorily mandating the universal creation of positions across all local jurisdictions.

In 2021, the State Board of Education adopted regulations based on the recommendations of the High School Graduation Task Force to increase the number of credits required for graduation from 21 to 22; a decision based in on the decisions to increase the number of credits in mathematics from three to four, and to increase in the number of credits in health education from one-half to one. The doubling of the mandated instruction in health education was necessitated by the dramatic increase in health education issues, including content focused on the opioid epidemic, sexual abuse assault instruction, suicide prevention, and mental health. As this Committee knows, MABE advocates that legislation addressing specific student health policy and services issues such as diabetes, opioid addiction, allergies, medical cannabis, and other chronic and acute conditions reflect the input of school health professionals and the consideration of available staff and resources. These same concerns apply to the proposal to mandate the designation of a new school system-wide position of health educator.

For the past two 2 years the pandemic has presented enormous challenges in meeting the physical and mental health needs of students, requiring major changes in school meal programs, responses to the trauma caused by the economic, health, and educational impacts of the pandemic. In addition, the pandemic is imposing extraordinary burdens on school personnel to conduct contact tracing and other services related to the safe reopening and operation of schools.

MABE believes it is critical that state and local budgets recognize these burdens and the associated costs. Local boards recognize the state role in governing student and school health issues through laws and regulations and advocates that such requirements not be overly prescriptive, costly, or burdensome.

For these reasons, MABE requests an unfavorable report on Senate Bill 852.

**SB852 UNFAVORABLE3:8.pdf**

Uploaded by: Linda Diefenbach

Position: UNF

SB852 UNFAVORABLE

No health educator position. Un necessary position. Waste of taxpayer dollars.

Strongly opposed and request committee give UNFAVORABLE to this bill.

Linda Diefenbach  
6742 Deer Spring Ln.  
Middletown, MD

# **Oppose SB0852.pdf**

Uploaded by: Peggy Williams

Position: UNF

SB0852 OPPOSE

Please withdraw this bill. Until parents get a better grasp on the specifics of the curriculums being taught to their kids, there should be no more “health education” taught except for basic reproduction and reproductive anatomy. Many school systems have been caught giving and teaching highly inappropriate and sexualized lessons and assignments. They ARE CROSSING WAY OVER THE LINE!!!

Sincerely,

A concerned parent  
Peggy Williams  
Severna Park, MD