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**BILL NO.:**           **HB 568**

**TITLE:**               **Education – Student-Organized Peaceful Demonstrations –  
Student Discipline and Policy**

**SPONSOR:**         Delegate Ebersole

**COMMITTEE:**      Ways and Means

**POSITION:**       **SUPPORT**

**DATE:**             February 21, 2023

Baltimore County **SUPPORTS** House Bill 568 – Education – Student-Organized Peaceful Demonstrations – Student Discipline and Policy. This legislation would prohibit a public school from prohibiting student-organized peaceful demonstrations.

The right to free speech is an essential component of democracy in our society. Throughout history, schools have been a vital hub for social movements through the use of free speech. Student-led movements such as March For Our Lives have been instrumental in enacting social change. These demonstrations have inspired legal and meaningful changes that would not have been possible if not for free speech on public school campuses.

HB 568 helps to ensure that students in Maryland have the right to organize and demonstrate peacefully. This bill prohibits a school from infringing on this right, and requires that each school board develops a clear written policy regarding these organizations. As a strong supporter of free speech and student rights, Baltimore County Executive John Olszewski supports HB 568. This bill not only protects student’s first amendment right, but allows schools to set forth guidance that keeps these students safe while allowing their voices to be heard.

Accordingly, Baltimore County requests a **FAVORABLE** report on HB 568. For more information, please contact Jenn Aiosa, Director of Government Affairs at [jaiosa@baltimorecountymd.gov](mailto:jaiosa@baltimorecountymd.gov).