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Subcommittees

Civil Law and Procedure

Public Safety



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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

March 7, 2023

**FAVORABLE: HB1105 – Water Safety and Swimming Course Public Schools**

**TO: Chair Vanessa Atterbeary, Vice Chair Jheanelle Wilkins and Members of the Ways and Means Committee**

House Bill 1105 is requiring the State Department of Education to develop curriculum content standards for a course of water safety and swimming for public school students in certain grades, requiring the county boards of certain education to implement the water safety and swimming course for students in certain grades in certain schools in the county; and generally relating to a course on water safety and swimming for public middle and high schools. This bill does a few things:

- 1. It ask for the curriculum to be developed by July 2024.**
- 2. Starting in 2025-2026 school year each county shall implement a course on water safety and swimming.**
- 3. This bill would allow for physical education credit to students for a successful completion of the course.**
- 4. A middle school or high school may partner with local parks and recreation facilities if that school does not have swimming facilities.**

Historically, Black Americans due to chattel slavery in America robbed an entire race to its connection to the water and the Jim Crow South and discrimination prevented black people access to pools across the United States.

Due to years of Discrimination, Black People are 5.5 times more likely to drown than white people and this is the true reasoning behind this bill. Swimming as a curriculum would save lives in our community.

According to USA Swimming, less than 1.5% of the Country's nearly 300,000 competitive swimmers are black. It is time to change that narrative.

Water Safety and Swimming should be **equitable** and the best way to do this is to allow our middle schools and high schools to develop a curriculum in our public schools.

I ask for your **Favorable Support on HB1105**. Thank you for time and please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions you may have.

Delegate



Karen Toles