



Delegate Vanessa E. Atterbeary, Chair
Delegate Jheanelle K. Wilkins, Vice Chair
Room 131
House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

February 11, 2023

Bill: House Bill 568 – Education- Student Organized Peaceful Demonstrations - Student Discipline and Policy

Position: Support

Dear Chair Atterbeary, Vice Chair Wilkins, and Members of the Committee:

I am writing on behalf of the Maryland School Psychologists' Association (MSPA), a professional organization representing about 500 school psychologists in Maryland. We advocate for the social-emotional, behavioral, and academic wellbeing of students and families across the state.

We support House Bill 568 which would allow students to engage in peaceful demonstrations without the risk of disciplinary action. This bill is in support of social justice and the rights of the child.

As school psychologists, we believe that all students have the right to attend schools in a safe, supportive environment. This bill allows students to advocate for their own needs to improve the safety and security of their schools. It also reduces the use of exclusionary discipline practices, which directly cause harm to students.

For these reasons, we urge a favorable report on HB568. If we can provide any further information or be of assistance, please contact us at legislative@mSPAonline.org or Sarah Peters at speters@hbstrategies.us or 410-322-2320.

Respectfully submitted,

Katie Phipps, M.Ed., Ed.S., NCSP
Committee Chair, Legislative Committee
Maryland School Psychologists' Association.