

BILL: House Bill 1488
TITLE: Public Schools - School Discipline - Training Practices
POSITION: OPPOSE
DATE: March 1, 2018
COMMITTEE: Ways and Means Committee
CONTACT: John R. Woolums, Esq.

The Maryland Association of Boards of Education (MABE), representing all twenty-four of the state's local boards of education, opposes House Bill 1488.

MABE recognizes and appreciates the intent of this legislation to promote high quality training for school security staff, including school resource officers (SROs). MABE and the local boards we represent know the major contributions SROs are making in schools across the state to benefit school climate, culture and safety.

However, MABE does not support the development and training based on uniform discipline standards. School security practices are carried out in the context of local school board policies and school system procedures. These local school system policies are then the basis for agreements with local law enforcement agencies whose employees typically provide the school security services within the local public schools.

If the training program envisioned in this bill is established, MABE respectfully requests that state funding be budgeted to ensure that local school systems and law enforcement agencies are able to participate fully in the state's training program.

MABE firmly believes that safety in public schools is the joint responsibility of local boards of education, school administrators and staff, students, parents and guardians, law enforcement and other public safety agencies, human services agencies, and the community in general. Therefore, we will continue to urge federal, state, and local governments to ensure adequate and equitable funding for local public school safety programs, alternative education programs, and the wide array of behavioral health and public safety services provided by other public and private entities, which are essential to maintaining safe schools and access to a quality education for all of Maryland's students.

For these reasons, MABE requests an unfavorable report on House Bill 1488.