

COUNTY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE COUNTY, MARYLAND  
Legislative Session 2013, Legislative Day No. 6

Bill No. 22-13

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Mr. Todd Huff, Councilman

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By the County Council, March 18, 2013

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A BILL  
ENTITLED

AN ACT concerning

School Picketing Buffer Zones

FOR the purpose of establishing fixed buffer zones at or near schools that minor children attend;  
to protect and promote the safety, well-being and a conducive education for students by  
adopting a limited prohibition against certain picketing activities during certain  
proscribed times; stating the purpose of the Act; defining certain terms; providing  
guidelines; providing penalties; and generally relating to picketing activities at schools.

BY adding

Section 17-1-119  
Article 17 - Miscellaneous Provisions and Offenses  
Title 1 - Miscellaneous Provisions and Offenses  
Baltimore County Code, 2003

WHEREAS, Baltimore County has a substantial government interest in protecting the  
safety and well-being of children during school hours; and

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EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.  
[Brackets] indicate matter stricken from existing law.  
~~Strike out~~ indicates matter stricken from bill.  
Underlining indicates amendments to bill.

WHEREAS, picketing at school sites causes emotional disturbance, distress and potential trauma to both children attending the school and to their parents, disrupts traffic, incites children to leave school grounds, and endangers the safety of students and those who may transport them to and from school; and

WHEREAS, full opportunity exists under the terms and provisions of this Act for the exercise of freedom of speech and other constitutional rights at times and places other than those proscribed by this Act; and

WHEREAS, the purpose of this Act is to protect the privacy and safety of school children while on school premises before, during, and after school, to prevent interference with a vital government function, and to preserve the peaceful, orderly character of the County's school locations and the school activities thereon; now, therefore

1           SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE COUNTY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE  
2 COUNTY, MARYLAND, that the laws of Baltimore County read as follows:

3                           Article 17 - Miscellaneous Provisions and Offenses

4           §17-1-119. SCHOOL PICKETING BUFFER ZONES.

5                   (A) *DEFINITIONS.*

6                           (1) IN THIS SECTION, THE FOLLOWING WORDS HAVE THE MEANINGS  
7 INDICATED.

8                           (2) "*PICKETING*" MEANS ANY FORM OF PROTEST MARCH OR PROTEST  
9 ACTIVITY ENGAGED IN BY A PERSON WITHIN 300 FEET OF ANY ENTRANCE TO A  
10 SCHOOL.

11                           (3) "SCHOOL" MEANS ANY PUBLIC OR PRIVATE ELEMENTARY,

1 MIDDLE, OR HIGH SCHOOL.

2 (B) *PROHIBITED*. A PERSON MAY NOT:

3 (1) ENGAGE IN PICKETING WHILE A SCHOOL IS IN SESSION, OR  
4 WITHIN ONE HOUR BEFORE A SCHOOL IS IN SESSION, OR WITHIN ONE HOUR  
5 AFTER A SCHOOL SESSION HAS CONCLUDED; OR

6 (2) OBSTRUCT, INTERFERE WITH, BLOCK OR PREVENT THE  
7 INTENDED USES OF A PUBLIC STREET, SIDEWALK, OR OTHER PUBLIC SPACE  
8 WHILE ENGAGED IN PICKETING.

9 (C) *PENALTY*. A PERSON WHO VIOLATES THIS SECTION IS GUILTY OF A  
10 MISDEMEANOR AND ON CONVICTION IS SUBJECT TO A FINE NOT EXCEEDING  
11 \$1,000 OR IMPRISONMENT NOT EXCEEDING NINETY (90) DAYS, OR BOTH.

12 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, that this Act shall take effect forty-  
13 five (45) days after its enactment.