



HB4 CRIMES - HATE CRIMES - USE OF A NOOSE OR SWASTIKA TO THREATEN OR INTIMIDATE

January 22, 2019

JUDICIARY COMMITTEE

SUPPORT

Jeanette Ortiz, Esq., Legislative & Policy Counsel (410.703.5352)

The Board of Education of Anne Arundel County supports **HB4 Crimes - Hate Crimes - Use of a Noose or Swastika to Threaten or Intimidate**. This bill prohibits a person from affixing, erecting, or placing a noose or swastika on the property of another without authorization, with the intent to threaten or intimidate any person or group of persons.

Behavior and actions that exhibit hate and bigotry are not tolerated at Anne Arundel County Public Schools (AACPS). As such, we continue to work with our staff and the community to be part of the solution to such acts in the county and in our schools.

In an effort to continue the dialogue and work toward creating climates free of hate and bigotry, AACPS will be conducting community meetings to discuss our efforts, allow student and community feedback, and break into small groups to discuss the issues and potential solutions. Our Office of Equity and Accelerated Student Achievement has been extremely busy meeting with community stakeholders and providing professional development to AACPS staff.

There is a lot of work, however, for everyone to do when it comes to eradicating hate and bigotry. We all have roles to play, and just as is the case when it comes to the education of our children, in this effort all must mean all. As such, we believe that HB4 – which clearly defines the depiction of nooses and swastikas as acts of hate – is an important step in the right direction to help strengthen Maryland's hate crime law.

Accordingly, the Board of Education of Anne Arundel County respectfully requests a **FAVORABLE** committee report on HB4.