

Keeping All Students Safe Act

Protecting All Students from the Dangers of Seclusion and Restraint

Every child should be safe and protected while in school. Tragically, in too many public schools, students are subjected to harsh and dangerous practices that include locking kids in rooms or forcibly restraining them, sometimes with mechanical or chemical devices, or by restraining students facedown and restricting their breathing. These practices are used [thousands of times](#) per school day nationwide. They cause [thousands of injuries](#) to students and staff members each year. The [vast majority of students](#) (78 percent) subjected to seclusion and restraint have a disability and are disproportionately boys (82 percent), with Black students also disproportionately represented. Some students are subjected to these practices hundreds of times in a school year or held in restraints or kept in seclusion rooms for hours at a time, [records show](#). In some cases, these practices have [resulted in death](#). Secluding or restraining kids often leaves [lasting emotional trauma](#). The continued presence of seclusion and restraint in our schools fundamentally undermines the goal of creating safe and supportive school environments for all students.

Despite knowing the dangers of seclusion and restraint, there remains no federal law regulating or prohibiting the practices in schools. This has led to a patchwork of state laws that lacks meaningful oversight and accountability. As a result, the public does not know the full extent of the use or harms of these practices. A 2020 GAO report found that at least 2,000 school districts, including some of the country's largest, reported zero incidences of seclusion and restraint. Further investigations have found several cases of school districts purposefully misreporting these figures.

The *Keeping All Students Safe Act*, introduced by Rep. Don Beyer (VA-08) and Ranking Member Bobby Scott (VA-03), alongside Sen. Chis Murphy (CT), Chair Bernie Sanders (VT), and Sen. Patty Murray (WA), would prohibit any school receiving federal funds from secluding a child or using dangerous restraint practices. The bill would also provide desperately needed oversight over any remaining incidences of restraining students, along with better equipping school personnel with the training they need to address school-expected behavior with evidence-based proactive strategies.

The *Keeping All Students Safe Act* would:

Establish minimum safety standards in schools by:

- Prohibiting seclusion, mechanical restraints, chemical restraints, physical restraint that restricts breathing or is life threatening, and any form of aversive behavioral intervention;
- Requiring certification of staff conducting physical restraint that meets the minimum standards;
- Prohibiting physical restraint as a planned intervention; and
- Requiring parental notification and follow-up meetings if a physical restraint occurs.

Support states by providing better training to ensure student and staff safety and establishing monitoring and enforcement systems by:

- Requiring each state to have its own policies, procedures, monitoring, and enforcement systems in place to meet the minimum standards within two years of the law’s enactment;
- Providing grant funding for states to establish, implement, and enforce the policies and procedures required by the law; and
- Improving state and local capacity to analyze the data and improve school climate and culture.

Increase transparency, oversight, and enforcement to prevent future abuse and death by:

- Requiring states to collect and report data on the use of seclusion and restraint annually; and
- Making data about restraint and seclusion publicly available while protecting student privacy, including data on the number of incidents, injuries, cases of death, and the demographic breakdown.