



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

MASSACHUSETTS HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
STATE HOUSE BOSTON, MA 02133

RE: H.1623/S.842 An Act decriminalizing non-violent and verbal student misconduct

DT: 14 July 2015

Dear Honorable Judiciary Committee,

Thank you for considering *H.1623/S.842 An Act decriminalizing non-violent and verbal student misconduct*.

The core of the bill focuses on the decriminalization of non-violent or verbal student misconduct; one can often refer to this non-violent behavior as “mouthing off.” Yet the bills co-existing resolve is reciprocated with its core focus, as it hopes to sway students away from time in prison, to a punishment that is imposed by schools themselves. Any member of the student body in grades K through 12, who breaks up or disturbs an assembly of people, whom gather for a lawful purpose, shall not be imprisoned if the verbal misconduct occurs within school buildings or on school grounds. This bill will prevent students from entering the “school to prison pipeline” and potentially entering a cycle of future imprisonment, low income, and the excessive use of state services, all at the cost of the Commonwealth.

H.1623/S.842 An Act decriminalizing non-violent and verbal student misconduct is a bill that deems necessary, as it lifts a harsh punishment on students, and keeps the safety of the students first in mind, all while establishing an alternative punishment that shall be carried out by the school.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Paul Heroux".

Representative Paul Heroux