

# HOUSE BILL 981

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By: **Delegates Guyton, Arian, Bagnall, Hill, Kerr, Lehman, Luedtke, Metzgar, and Ruth**

Introduced and read first time: February 5, 2020

Assigned to: Ways and Means

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## A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **County Boards of Education – Therapy Dogs – Certification and Use in Schools**

3 FOR the purpose of requiring each county board of education to allow the use of therapy  
4 dogs in public schools in the county; requiring county boards to adopt a policy for the  
5 use of therapy dogs in schools in the county; defining a certain term; and generally  
6 relating to therapy dogs in public schools.

7 BY adding to

8 Article – Education

9 Section 4–138

10 Annotated Code of Maryland

11 (2018 Replacement Volume and 2019 Supplement)

12 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,  
13 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

14 **Article – Education**

15 **4–138.**

16 (A) IN THIS SECTION, “THERAPY DOG” MEANS A DOG THAT IS CERTIFIED TO  
17 PROVIDE AFFECTION AND COMFORT TO CHILDREN WHO NEED EMOTIONAL SUPPORT  
18 IN A SCHOOL SETTING.

19 (B) EACH COUNTY BOARD SHALL ALLOW THE USE OF THERAPY DOGS IN  
20 PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN THE COUNTY.

21 (C) EACH COUNTY BOARD SHALL ADOPT A POLICY FOR THE USE OF  
22 THERAPY DOGS IN SCHOOLS IN THE COUNTY.

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EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1           SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July  
2   1, 2020.