

**ACTION ALERT: ASK CONGRESS TO SUPPORT BILL TO PREVENT
DANGEROUS RESTRAINT & SECLUSION
CALL OR EMAIL CONGRESS ON JUNE 12 (or during that week)**

On June 12, 2014, please call your two Senators and Representative and ask them to COSPONSOR the KEEPING ALL STUDENTS SAFE ACT, S. 2036 and H.R. 1893. Ask your friends and family to do the same. Call 202-224-3121 and ask for your Senators and Representative. If you cannot call, then please email (Senate: <http://1.usa.gov/Senat> ; House: <http://bit.ly/RepWrit>). You can also do it another day if needed. The most important thing is for Congress to hear from many parents, people with disabilities, students, advocates, professionals, friends, families, and neighbors. You can look up your Senators and Representatives at the links above. Be sure to say you are a constituent and include your City and State. Personalize this if you can. For example, describe your connection to disability. If you have a story about restraint or seclusion or worry that it could happen to your child or friends, please say this. Explain how you, your family members, friends, and those with disabilities whom you advocate for have the right to be protected.

**MESSAGE TO SHARE WITH YOUR SENATORS AND REPRESENTATIVE
(SAMPLE TALKING POINTS/EMAIL)**

Please cosponsor the Keeping All Students Safe Act, S.2036 and H.R. 1893, and protect all American students nationwide from restraint and seclusion in our nation's schools. Over 110,000 students were subjected to restraint and seclusion in 2011-12. These procedures have killed, injured, and traumatized students, according to Congressional reports. They include a child suffocated in restraint after he tried to get lunch; a 7 year old who died in restraint after blowing bubbles in her milk, and a young teen who hung himself while his teacher sat outside the seclusion room. These dangerous procedures are often used when no one is at risk of harm. Parents often are not notified or find out much later; prompt notification is necessary to detect concussions and seek medical help. The Keeping All Students Safe Act, S. 2036 and H.R. 1893, will forbid the use of restraint except in emergencies threatening physical safety. Both will prevent non-emergency seclusion. Both require schools to notify parents on the same day. The bills will promote a necessary shift towards positive behavioral interventions that evidence shows will keep students safe. [Be sure to say you are a constituent and include your City and State.]

MORE DETAILED INFORMATION AND BACKGROUND

Some people like more detailed information when they call a Senate office.

- A Government Accountability Office (GAO) [report](#) found that 20 students had died in seclusion; countless others have been injured and traumatized, according to numerous reports. One teen [hung himself](#) in a seclusion room while staff sat outside the locked door; [a seven year old died](#) face down in physical restraint after blowing bubbles in her milk; and a young teen was [suffocated face down](#) in restraint by his teacher twice his

size when he tried to get lunch. Recent stories include an 8 year old with Down Syndrome whose shoes were [duct-taped](#) so tightly that she could not walk; a 10 year old with autism who was [pinned face down](#) after a tantrum over a puzzle; and a child with Cerebral Palsy who severed her finger when confined in seclusion. Parents often do not learn that restraint/seclusion occurred or learn long after the events. Prompt notification is important to seek medical care and to work with schools to prevent future episodes.

- The most recent [data](#) has shown that in 2011-12, over 110,000 students were subjected to restraint and seclusion. These included at least 70,000 students were subjected to physical restraint; 37,000, to isolated seclusion; and nearly 4,000 to mechanical restraint. The actual total is likely much higher. Restraint and Seclusion are used disproportionately upon students with disabilities and minority students.
- **Both Congressional bills, S. 2036 and H.R. 1893, will forbid the use of restraint except in emergencies threatening physical safety.** Both seek to prevent non-emergency seclusion: the House bill, by limiting it to threats of physical harm; the Senate, by banning it. Both bills require schools to notify parents on the same day. Prompt notification enables parents to seek medical care for concussions or other injuries and to work with schools to prevent recurrences. Both bills will ban restraints that impede breathing, and dangerous mechanical and chemical restraints. They will ensure that teachers have the tools and resources they need to prevent challenging behaviors. The bills will enhance public oversight by requiring data reporting and collection.
- The Keeping All Students Safe Act will shift schools towards preventing problematic behavior through evidence-based positive behavioral interventions and supports, and keep students and staff safe. In many cases, the use of positive supports and interventions greatly diminishes and even eliminates the need to use restraint and seclusion. For example, the Centennial School in Pennsylvania cut restraint and seclusion use from over 1,000 occurrences per year to less than ten through the use of positive intervention plans. Montgomery County, Virginia uses “easily accessible, evidence-based practices” that have reduced crisis-level behaviors by 78% and targeted problem behaviors by 81%, according to Senate testimony. Restraint and seclusion are rarely used.
- Many [states](#) don’t adequately protect all students from restraint and seclusion. Many allow their use when no one’s safety is in danger. Only 14 states restrict restraint to dangers threatening safety emergencies for all children; only 18, for children with disabilities. Only 1 state bans seclusion of all children; 4 ban seclusion of children with disabilities, and another 10 limit seclusion to physical safety emergencies. Only 20 states require parents of all children be informed of restraint and seclusion use. Roughly half of all states allow restraints that impede breathing.

WHAT YOU CAN DO: CONTACT CONGRESS on JUNE 12 or soon after

Please call or write to your Senators and Representatives and ask them to cosponsor the Keeping All Students Safe Act, S.2036 and H.R. 1893. Call 202-224-3121 and ask for your Senator or Representative. Then ask for their education aide or disability aide. Leave a voicemail if you do not reach them. Calls are more effective, but you can also use email.

Email your Senators through <http://1.usa.gov/Senat> and your Representative through <http://www.house.gov/> (put your zip code in the box in the upper corner). Please personalize your message, even with a single sentence. Explain your connection to disability. If you have a story about restraint or seclusion or worry that it could affect your child or friends, please say this. Explain how you, your family members, friends, and those with disabilities for whom you advocate have the right to be protected. **Be sure to say you are a constituent and include your City and State.**

The more we reach out to Congress directly, the more successful we will be! Every call or email sent to Congress is very valuable and very important.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Senate Bill [S. 2036](#) and [Senate Committee Description](#) about bill

House Bill [H.R. 1893](#) and [House Statement](#) about bill

Look up your State's Laws and Policies in [My State's Seclusion and Restraint Laws](#)

[GAO Report](#) about dangers of restraint/seclusion

Education Department's recent [Data Snapshot](#)