SB 2793: Improving School Discipline Data to Make Schools Safer, Raise Academic Achievement, and Save Taxpayer Dollars

Across Illinois, schools continue to overuse out-of-school suspensions, expulsions, and school-based arrests. Based on the most recent available data, there were over 272,000 out-of-school suspensions of Illinois students, more than 2,400 expulsions, and more than 10,000 arrests in just one school year. As a result, Illinois students are losing over one million instructional days per year.

The research is clear: these extreme disciplinary practices have not made schools safer or improved educational quality, but they have been deeply harmful to students, families, schools, and the entire state. SB 2793 would help to identify specific problems and promote targeted solutions through the following:

- Creating an improved public understanding of school discipline issues by requiring the public reporting of data already collected on the use of out-of-school suspensions, expulsions, removals to alternative settings, and student retention;
- Requiring that districts report to the state its data on the issuance of school-based arrests and criminal citations, which it is already required by the U.S. Department of Education Office of Civil Rights to collect;
- Requiring the districts with the highest rates of student exclusion, law enforcement involvement, and racial inequity to submit improvement plans to the Illinois State Board of Education, which shall provide technical assistance to these districts.

By improving the transparency and usage of this data, SB 2793 would work together with SB 3004/HB 4655 to eliminate the use of ineffective, counter-productive, and costly school disciplinary practices across the state.