Safe Schools Coalition endorses HB 2801-S because:

- It sets a clear minimum standard for harassment policies and procedures in districts. School districts shouldn't have to guess what is protective enough.

- It establishes a point person in every district regarding harassment. This will minimize the likelihood of students falling through the huge cracks between local schools as they transfer from school to school in an attempt to escape abuse at the hands of peers.

- It gives instruction to the Education Ombudsman to provide strategies and tools; families and districts are hungry for these kinds of resources.

- It establishes an on-going work group to ensure the work will continue.

Just this week, we have been assisting the family of a 5th grader who's been bullied unmercifully and beaten up twice by a group of three classmates ... apparently for his facial deformity and his Asian heritage. Earlier this month, we worked with a district where a 7 year-old girl had been assaulted by an 8 year-old boy at school. We hear of girls' head scarves being ripped off their heads, of children being bullied for being religious fanatics just because they carry a Bible to school.

Schools need every resource the legislature can provide.