



POSITION ON PROPOSED LEGISLATION

BILL: SB842
POSITION: Opposed
DATE: March 10, 2021

The Maryland Office of the Public Defender respectfully requests that the Committee issue an unfavorable report on Senate Bill 842. While we laud Senator Benson's focus on the need for quality programming for young women and girls in the juvenile justice system, we believe the workgroup to study and develop an inventory of quality, evidence-based or promising practices proposed in both HB1187/SB853 or in SB905/HB1121 are better vehicles to achieve the desired result.

The Juvenile Justice Reform Council (JJRC) has spent the last year researching best practices regarding the treatment of juveniles who are subject to the criminal and juvenile justice systems and identifying recommendations to limit or otherwise mitigate risk factors that contribute to juvenile contact with the criminal and juvenile justice systems. We believe this issue falls squarely under the purview of the JJRC and that existing body should be tasked with research and reporting on the assessment, treatment, and available resources for young women and girls in the juvenile justice system.

For these reasons, the Maryland Office of the Public Defender urges an unfavorable report on Senate Bill 842.