



TESTIMONY FOR SB0708

Public Health - Youth Camps, Development Organizations, and Programs - Criminal History Records Checks

Bill Sponsor: Chair, Judicial Proceedings

Committee: Judicial Proceedings

Organization Submitting: Maryland Legislative Coalition

Person Submitting: Cecilia Plante, co-chair

Position: FAVORABLE

I am submitting this testimony in strong support of SB0708 on behalf of the Maryland Legislative Coalition. The Maryland Legislative Coalition is an association of activists - individuals and grassroots groups in every district in the state. We are unpaid citizen lobbyists and our Coalition supports well over 30,000 members.

What a small, but mighty change. Instead of Youth Development Organizations, or Camps applying to the Department of Health for a background check on a camp owner, operator, employee or volunteer, the Department of Health will do it for everyone.

Our members applaud this change. ANYONE who will have access to a youth should have a background check. Anyone. This will make the process of ensuring that each person who has access to young children is trustworthy and does not have a criminal history. We also are happy to learn that whenever someone who already works with young children has a reported criminal offense, that information will be provided to the Department of Health, who will in turn send that information to the Youth Development Organization or Camp.

This is a proactive response to a known problem. We thank the Chair for bringing this legislation forward.

We strongly support this bill and recommend a **FAVORABLE** report in committee.