

# **SB0708 Youth Camps - Criminal Record History FAV.p**

Uploaded by: Cecilia Plante

Position: FAV



## 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.

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Uploaded by: State of Maryland (MD)

Position: FAV



## DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Wes Moore, Governor · Aruna Miller, Lt. Governor · Laura Herrera Scott, M.D., M.P.H., Secretary

February 21, 2023

The Honorable William C. Smith, Jr.  
Chair, Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee  
2 East, Miller Senate Office Building  
Annapolis, MD 21401-1991

### **RE: SB 708 – Public Health - Youth Camps, Development Organizations, and Programs - Criminal History Records Checks**

Dear Chair Smith and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of Health (MDH) respectfully submits this letter of information for Senate Bill (SB) 708 – Public Health - Youth Camps, Development Organizations, and Programs - Criminal History Records Checks. SB 708 authorizes MDH to receive federal criminal history record checks on behalf of youth camps licensed by MDH. SB 708 also removes references to youth development organizations from the section of statute pertaining to youth camp criminal history record checks.

SB 708 was introduced at the request of MDH to resolve two statutory conflicts that threaten the operation of Maryland’s more than 1,000 regulated youth camps, which serve an essential role to families across the state. MDH strongly supports this legislation and urges a favorable report.

Youth camps in Maryland are required to review national and State criminal history record checks for any of their staff who work with children. Prior to and through the 2021 season, youth camps applied directly to the Maryland Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services (DPSCS) Criminal Justice Information System (CJIS) to receive both the State and federal criminal history record checks on their staff. MDH received only the criminal history check results on the personnel administrator for each camp. Once approved by MDH, the personnel administrator would review all the youth camp’s personnel’s criminal history record checks.

DPSCS recently informed MDH that federal criminal history record information cannot be provided directly to youth camps, but must be sent directly to the licensing authority and not re-disseminated. Furthermore, MDH must have specific statutory authority, as the licensing agency, to receive this information in Health-General, in accordance with the provisions of 34 U.S.C.A. §40316. SB 708 adds statutory language to Health-General §14-403 that will enable MDH to receive federal criminal history record information on youth camp staff.

A second statutory conflict occurred with the passage of SB 817 in 2022, which requires MDH to receive federal criminal history record checks for “youth development organizations.” These

organizations are not licensed or regulated by MDH, which creates a conflict because of the requirement (per 34 U.S.C.A. §40316) that the criminal history background checks must go to the government licensing entity for youth development organizations. Therefore, SB 708 removes the references to youth development organizations.

MDH notes that as federal criminal history record information can no longer be directly provided to and reviewed by youth camps, this responsibility will fall to MDH. MDH is prepared to address this additional duty and will identify appropriate staffing needs. Additionally, MDH will continue to work with DPSCS to evaluate long-term strategies to lower the overall cost and administrative burden.

If you would like to discuss this further, please do not hesitate to contact Megan Peters, Acting Director of Governmental Affairs at [megan.peters@maryland.gov](mailto:megan.peters@maryland.gov) or (410) 260-3190.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "L. Herrera Scott".

Laura Herrera Scott, M.D., M.P.H.  
Secretary

# **SB708 Informational BJC Camp Background Check.pdf**

Uploaded by: Sarah Miicke

Position: INFO

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**WRITTEN TESTIMONY**

**Senate Bill 708 – Public Health - Youth Camps, Development Organizations, and Programs - Criminal History Records Checks**

**Judicial Proceedings Committee**

**February 21, 2023**

**Letter of Information**

**MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS**

Adat Chaim Congregation  
 American Jewish Committee  
 Americans for Peace Now  
 Baltimore Chapter  
 American Israel Public Affairs Committee  
 American Red Magen David for Israel  
 American Zionist Movement  
 Amit Women  
 Association of Reform Zionists of America  
 Baltimore Board of Rabbis  
 Baltimore Hebrew Congregation  
 Baltimore Jewish Green and Just Alliance  
 Baltimore Men's ORT  
 Baltimore Zionist District  
 Beth Am Congregation  
 Beth El Congregation  
 Beth Israel Congregation  
 Beth Shalom Congregation of  
 Howard County  
 Beth Tfiloh Congregation  
 B'nai B'rith, Chesapeake Bay Region  
 B'nai Israel Congregation  
 B'nai Jacob Shaaarei Zion Congregation  
 Bolton Street Synagogue  
 Chevra Ahavas Chesed, Inc.  
 Chevrei Tzedek Congregation  
 Chizuk Amuno Congregation  
 Congregation Beit Tikvah  
 Congregation Tiferes Yisroel  
 Federation of Jewish Women's  
 Organizations of Maryland  
 Hadassah  
 Har Sinai - Oheb Shalom Congregation  
 J Street  
 Jewish Federation of Howard County  
 Jewish Labor Committee  
 Jewish War Veterans  
 Jewish War Veterans, Ladies Auxiliary  
 Jewish Women International  
 Jews For Judaism  
 Moses Montefiore Anshe Emunah  
 Hebrew Congregation  
 National Council of Jewish Women  
 Ner Tamid Congregation  
 Rabbinical Council of America  
 Religious Zionists of America  
 Shaarei Tfiloh Congregation  
 Shomrei Emunah Congregation  
 Suburban Orthodox Congregation  
 Temple Beth Shalom  
 Temple Isaiah  
 Zionist Organization of America  
 Baltimore District

The Baltimore Jewish Council Represents the Associated Jewish Community Federation of Baltimore and all its agencies, including our Jewish Community Center's (JCC'S) in Baltimore City and Baltimore County. Our JCC's run J Camps in Owings Mills, which have over 1300 campers and 400 counselors. We are concerned about the realistic implementation and execution of SB708. Currently our J Camps fingerprint and run that information through CJIS, however, we understand that due to a change in Federal law, private entities will no longer have access to FBI CJIS results, results that are needed in order to approve a job application for a counselor or volunteer. This is why SB708 is being introduced, so that a governmental entity, the Department of Health, will have access to these results. However, camps would be required to wait for the Department to let them know if they are able to hire the counselor/volunteer. We are concerned with the turnaround time and the negative affect this could have on camps throughout the state. Counselors are mainly hired from May and June, having tens of thousands of background checks that need to be approved by the Department and then that information given to the camps before the staff hiring process can finish. We need to know that the Department will have the staffing capability to give camps this necessary information in a few days so that camps can be properly staffed. We know the department is willing to hire staff, but the reality of hiring and keeping staff who would only work seasonally for the Department may be difficult and further hinder the ability of camps to staff up for summer. We would like to see a specific requirement of getting information back to camps with in 3 days. Camps are an integral part of society and while we understand the change in Federal law, we would like some specific insurances in the bill so that the department is held accountable for quick turn arounds.

*The Baltimore Jewish Council, a coalition of central Maryland Jewish organizations and congregations, advocates at all levels of government, on a variety of social welfare, economic and religious concerns, to protect and promote the interests of the Associated Jewish Federation of Baltimore, its agencies and the Greater Baltimore Jewish community.*