



# CITY OF DISTRICT HEIGHTS POLICE DEPARTMENT

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*Chief of Police*

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Testimony submitted to the House Appropriations Committee  
HB1136 - Support  
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The City of District Heights partnered with the State for 20 years to fund District Heights Family & Youth Service Bureau. Unfortunately, the funding for Youth Service Bureaus has decreased over time resulting in fewer resources in communities to serve young people and their families. As the current Chief of the District Heights Police Department, I urge your support for HB 1136 which will return funding to YSBs.

As a law enforcement officer, I have seen the benefit of working with young people early, before they enter into the juvenile justice system. The District Heights Police Department relies on District Heights Family & Youth Services Bureau as a resource for residents facing difficult family and individual issues. Officers carry information about the Bureau in their cars and pass along information to individuals and families they encounter who might benefit from these prevention and intervention services.

District Heights Family & Youth Service Bureau provides an array of mental health and support services including counseling services, parenting classes, school-based groups, crisis intervention services, family engagement activities, college tours, and substance use disorder assessments for our local youth. They do highly effective work and are a vital part of our community and the City's efforts to support residents facing challenging times. District Heights Family & Youth Services is well respected and known to our residents as a safe and effective place to seek services when a youth is experiencing mental health or behavioral issues.

The funding this bill provides would increase the wrap-around and preventative services desperately needed to address spiking incidents of juvenile crime, to help make sure that the Juvenile Justice Reform Act of 2022 is successful by providing community-based programs for youth. The services are proven to work in keeping young people out of the criminal justice system.

I respectfully ask that you support this bill to protect the funding for programs like District Heights Family & Youth Services Bureau and re-establish this partnership between the State and communities like the City of District Heights.

Chief of Police

  
Ronald C Tarpley