

SB052_Ann Rubin_UNFAV
Feb. 12, 2024
Anna Rubin
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TESTIMONY ON SB052 POSITION: UNFAVORABLE
Juvenile Justice Restoration Act of 2024

TO: Chair Smith, Vice Chair Waldstreicher, and members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee

FROM: Dr. Anna Rubin

My name is Anna Rubin. I am a resident of District 13. I am submitting this testimony against SB052, Juvenile Justice Restoration Act of 2024. I am a White member of Columbia Jewish Congregation and act as the co-chair of its Social Action Committee and a member of the CJC Standing for Racial Justice Committee. I am also co-chair of the Indivisible Howard County Immigration Action Team.

Jewish tradition focuses a great deal on nurturing, educating and caring for children. We are taught that the Divine encompasses both justice and mercy, but some prosecutors and lawmakers scapegoat Black children rather than nurture them as the divine beings we know all children are.

- I am opposed to SB052 because the proposed changes do not enhance community safety. This bill undermines important provisions of the Juvenile Justice Restoration Act and ignores over 20 years of research and data on the most effective ways to hold kids accountable and improve safety. SB52 targets the Juvenile Justice Reform Act and the Child Interrogation Protection Act, two crucial pieces of legislation passed into law in the past few years to protect the rights and dignity of children.
- Children must be given the opportunity to speak to a lawyer prior to a custodial interrogation by law enforcement – SB52's stipulation that parents, guardians, or custodians of a child can consent to the custodial interrogation of a child without the child's consultation with an attorney is simply insufficient.
- Similarly, efforts to repeal the Juvenile Justice Reform Act through altering the jurisdiction of juvenile court to include jurisdiction over 10-12 year olds alleged to have committed a crime involving the use or possession of a firearm is harmful and flies in the face of recommendations from the [Juvenile Justice Reform Commission](#) (see pg. 19 for recommendations).

I am so grateful my own adopted Latino son has been spared from any experience with detention. When he was 12, he was involved with starting a small fire in our area. But his case was diverted to his doing community service and counseling. I suspect that because I am White, that changed the attitude of the police. That this method was effective is proven by his having had no further incidents in the ensuing 20 years.

I am very concerned that the proposed changes steamroll intake, may lead to overcharging, and prevent law enforcement from referring a kid for immediate services including local care teams, youth service bureaus, prevention services and law enforcement-based diversion programs. Neither does it. It doesn't allocate more funds for support for youth.

I respectfully urge this committee to return an unfavorable report on SB0744.

Sincerely,
Dr. Anna Rubin

