

Date of Hearing 2/13/24

Emily C. Blank  
Brentwood, MD

**TESTIMONY ON SB52 EmilyBlank - POSITION:/UNFAVORABLE**  
**Juvenile Justice Restoration Act of 2024**

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

**FROM:** Emily C. Blank

**My name is Emily Blank. I am a resident of District 47a. I am submitting this testimony against (SB52)**

I am a member of Congregation Oseh Shalom in Laurel, MD. I retired from teaching economics at Howard University in May 2023.

I am strongly opposed to lowering the age at which children can be put into the justice system,. For one thing, human brains are not completely developed until individuals reach the age of 25. There are many ways to hold kids accountable for unwanted behavior and poor choices, but altering the jurisdiction of juvenile court to include jurisdiction over 10-12 year olds does not appropriately hold children accountable. Instead, it goes against recommendations from experts and would be harmful.

I am also strongly opposed to allowing children to be placed in the adult system, a current practice in Maryland.. Children in the adult system are often placed in solitary confinement, which, according to Amnesty International, is torture. Children who do not have rehabilitative support designed for children (and which is unavailable in the adult system) are more likely to become adult offenders. Finally, 80% of juveniles charged as adults have their charges dropped.  
**I respectfully urge this committee to return an unfavorable report on SB#52.**