

Betsy Biben-Seligman

TESTIMONY ON SBI20 - UNFAVORABLE
Juvenile Law - Custodial Interrogation - Parental Consultation

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

FROM: Betsy Biben-Seligman

OPENING: My name is Betsy Biben-Seligman. My husband and I have been home owners in Kensington since 1986 and before then my husband Richard Seligman and I rented in Silver Spring. We submit this testimony in opposition of SBI20, Juvenile Law - Custodial Interrogation - Parental Consultation.

I was so proud of my State of Maryland until recently. When I learned about Custodial Interrogation bill I was shocked. Could this really be Maryland and not in the Deep South? The terms as laid out in this bill are vastly inappropriate.

Although I agree that parents should be more involved with their children's court cases this suggested bill is totally unfair and wrong. This bill suggests that parents understand the law and know how to advise their children on legal matters. Would wealthy parents who were not lawyers understand the law and a child's rights? Would wealthy parents decide they won't hire an attorney? Would you legislators not hire an attorney for you child who is arrested? The answers of course NO. This law would both create greater economic barriers and develop deeper racist standing.

The reason this is deficient is that parents neither understand the law nor how to advise their children on legal matters such as invoking their 5th Amendment right to remain silent and thereby not incriminating themselves. Parents are not aware of 4th amendment requirements for a warrant based upon probable cause before allowing search of themselves and/or property.

No child should be interrogated without consulting a lawyer.

I respectfully urge this committee to return an unfavorable report on SBI20.