



PREPARE
PREpare for PArole and REentry

February 6, 2024

Re: Testimony in Support of HB 0727
Juvenile Law - Custodial Interrogation - In-Person Attorney Consultation Requirement

Dear Members of the Judiciary Committee:

I am a registered voter, returning citizen residing in District #41, a tax payer, and advocate for juvenile and criminal justice reform. Most of importantly, I am a survivor of adjudication in the adult system as a fifteen year. I support HB 0727 sponsored by Delegate Conway.

I am one of many unfortunate children placed automatically in the adult system. I am not the poster child for this campaign. I committed horrible crimes, was sentenced to an aggregate parole eligible life sentence, and served forty-two years in prison. I am truly sorry for the far-reaching consequences of my extremely bad behavior and believe that incarceration was warranted. I am grateful and blessed to be a beneficiary of the JuvRA legislation which many of you Honorable Committee members passed.

Who I am today does not reflect who I was in 1979. Actually, I am a rare success of the Criminal Justice System. I want to share the real dangers of failing to treat juvenile offenders different from adult offenders.

I was detained by authorities the day before I should have began High School. I had no prior run-ins with the law. In fact, I was taught to trust the police. So, I answered honestly when asked questions at the Police Station. I misunderstood Miranda to be a ranking female officer who would be coming to read me my rights. After admitting guilt, handing over physical evidence, and released to the custody of my father, an adult warrant was issued for my arrest the following morning.

Had I been warned and known better, I would not have voluntarily incriminated myself. I was guilty as sin. Yet, I did not consider that the police were not always my friend, and I could go to adult jail forever. Needless to say, my first few years in prison were the worse of my life.

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I offer my sad experience to show that children and adults are different. Children warrant greater protections than adults because they have more to lose. Thus, I ask you to vote favorably for HB 0727. Thank you for your time.

Truly yours,

//GRP

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