



Ella Ennis, Legislative Chairman
Maryland Federation of Republican Women
PO Box 6040, Annapolis MD 21401
Email: eee437@comcast.net

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Senator Will Smith, Chairman
And Members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee
Senate of Maryland
Annapolis, Maryland

RE: **SB 0052** – Juvenile Justice Restoration Act – **FAVORABLE**

Dear Chairman Smith and Committee Members,

The Maryland Federation of Republican Women strongly supports SB 0052 *Juvenile Justice Restoration Act* to allow children at least 10 years old to come under the jurisdiction of the Juvenile Court when a child is alleged to have committed:

- a crime of violence, or
- a crime involving the use or possession of a firearm, or
- any crime if the child has been arrested on two previous occasions.

It is shocking and painful to think of a child of 10 or 12 committing a crime of violence or using a firearm in the commission of a crime. Reliable statistics on how often this happens are needed to identify at-risk students and to track their progress towards a productive and lawful mindset.

The bill's provision addressing any crime where the child has two prior arrests is very important. Steering children on a path to becoming a productive law-abiding citizen requires accountability. The first step in accountability is understanding that the action was wrong.

SB 0052 creates a mechanism to establish accountability that can lead to intervention programs that will hopefully re-direct at-risk children away from crime – Truancy Reduction Court Program, academic tutoring opportunities, anger management counseling, positive social interactions, etc. These and other oversight activities help at-risk youth reform their actions and become productive and responsible citizens.

The bill also allows a law enforcement officer to conduct an otherwise lawful custodial interrogation of a child without the child's consultation with an attorney when the child's parent or guardian consents to the custodial interrogation of the child.

Please vote for a **FAVORABLE** Report for **SB 0052**.

Sincerely,
Ella Ennis
Legislative Chairman