



HB 1107 - Juvenile Law – Confinement and Restrictive Housing – Limitations

MCAA Position: **SUPPORT W/ Amendments** TO: Judiciary Committee

DATE: February 17, 2025

FROM: Ryan Ross, President
Lamonte Cooke, Legislative Committee
Mary Ann Thompson, Legislative Committee

The Maryland Correctional Administrator's Association (MCAA), an organization comprised of our statewide jail wardens and administrators for the promotion and improvements of best correctional practices **SUPPORTS** Senate Bill 0827 with an amendment specifying that restrictive housing limitations apply specifically to the Department of Juvenile Services (DJS) as a correctional unit, in accordance with Correctional Services Article §2-401 (2) (ii). This bill is a crucial step in safeguarding juveniles in the justice system, especially those under adult criminal court jurisdiction.

The bill's intent to ensure juveniles are not housed in adult facilities, where they may come into contact with incarcerated adults, is vital for their safety, rehabilitation, and well-being. However, the bill would be more effective if restrictive housing limitations are directly applied to DJS.

Adult correctional facilities are not designed for juveniles and lack the infrastructure to ensure proper sight and sound separation. Modifying these facilities would be costly, with some estimates exceeding \$30 million, which makes retrofitting adult facilities an impractical solution. Currently, juveniles often remain in adult facilities for extended periods while awaiting placement in juvenile facilities, where they are sometimes placed in restrictive housing, which is harmful and insufficient.

Instead of retrofitting adult facilities, the focus should be on creating and expanding juvenile facilities that meet the specific needs of young offenders, providing age-appropriate programming and ensuring separation from adults.

The MCAA respectfully urges the committee to issue a **FAVORABLE** report on Senate Bill 0827, with the amendment to apply restrictive housing limitations to DJS. This will better address the needs of juveniles and ensure they are placed in the proper environment for rehabilitation.