

Dear Members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee,

This testimony is being submitted by Showing Up for Racial Justice Baltimore in collaboration with Out For Justice. **I am a resident of District 45, and I am testifying in support of SB0323, the Youth Charging Reform Act.**

SB323 would end the practice of charging 14 and 15-year old children as adults, and ensure that only 16 and 17-year-olds accused of the most serious crimes, such as rape and murder, are charged in adult court.

The practice of charging children as adults is inhumane. It is also economically wasteful, as the vast majority of these cases are either transferred to juvenile court or dismissed.<sup>1</sup> Finally, it's ineffective, since statistics indicate that automatic charging of youth as adults does not decrease youth crime generally or reduce recidivism.<sup>2</sup> By significantly decreasing the automatic charging of youth as adults, we can bring Maryland more into line with modern juvenile justice standards, redirect resources to treating rather than simply imprisoning young offenders, and ultimately improve the safety of our communities by preventing re-offending. It is for these reasons that I am encouraging you to vote **in support of SB0323, the Youth Charging Reform Act.**

Thank you for your time, service, and consideration.

Sincerely,  
Brytani Fraser  
3211 Moravia rd. Baltimore, MD 21214



Showing Up for Racial Justice

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<sup>1</sup> In 2017-19, 48% of juveniles charged as adults in Baltimore City were returned to juvenile court, and 33% were dismissed or otherwise closed without a verdict. In MDEC counties the figures were 41% and 36% respectively. Juvenile Justice Reform Council Supplemental Report p 33.

<sup>2</sup> Lila Kazemian, *Pathways to Desistance From Crime Among Juveniles and Adults: Applications to Criminal Justice Policy and Practice*, Nov. 2021 (internal citations removed), <https://www.ojp.gov/pdffiles1/nij/301503.pdf>