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LETTER OF INFORMATION FOR HOUSE BILL 1058

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The Governor's Office of Crime Prevention and Policy (GOCPP) advises the Governor on criminal justice strategies, coordinates across public safety agencies, and allocates resources statewide to support public safety.

HB 1058 creates a Youth Delinquency Prevention Fund within GOCPP. The purpose of the Fund is to provide grants to community-based programs, including Youth Services Bureaus, to provide services to youth, including delinquency, suicide, and substance-use disorder prevention, as well as positive youth and family development promotion. Money for the Fund would be sourced from appropriations in the state budget to the Fund, interest earnings on the Fund, and other sources accepted for the Fund's benefit.

Community providers and Youth Services Bureaus provide essential services, including individual, group, and family counseling; crisis intervention; community education; referral services; substance abuse and mental health assessments; and positive youth development and family programs. There are Youth Service Bureaus currently serving Baltimore City, Baltimore County, Carroll County, Charles County, and Prince George's County.

GOCPP currently administers two youth justice and delinquency prevention grant funds that serve the same priorities as HB 1058. Therefore, GOCPP believes that the proposed Youth Delinquency Prevention Fund is duplicative of other funding sources already administered in Maryland.

GOCPP manages the Federal Title II Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention Act (JJDP) and the state-funded Title II Delinquency Prevention Match (JSMR). The primary purpose of these two grants is to improve outcomes for youth at risk of interacting with the juvenile justice system or already within the system. The funding is intentionally distributed to strengthen community-based programs and services, expand community-based diversion programs, and prioritize programs focused on positive youth development. Youth Service Bureaus are eligible for both JJAC and JSMR funds.

GOCPP combines these two grants to maximize the impact of the dollars within communities in need, while streamlining the process for community-based applicants. The state-funded JSMR grant is in place, which provides a clear and accountable mechanism for the Legislature to appropriate additional state funding in lieu of creating a separate fund. Expanding funding within the current framework would promote efficiency, reduce duplication, and allow GOCPP to continue leveraging federal and state dollars in a coordinated manner to serve youth and families in the community.