



*"Being here for Maryland's Children, Youth, and Families"*

**Testimony submitted to Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee**

**March 3, 2020**

**Senate Bill 769 – Department of Juvenile Services - Juvenile Strategic Reentry Program**

### **Support**

The Maryland Association of Youth Service Bureaus, which represents a statewide network of bureaus throughout the State of Maryland, **Supports** Senate Bill 769 – Department of Juvenile Services - Juvenile Strategic Reentry Program. SB 769 will create a program to reduce recidivism for children and youth returning to their communities from juvenile facility. The program will provide re-entry specialists who meet with the youth before release and offer resources to both the youth and family upon release to stabilize the youth and ease re-entry into the community.

Youth Service Bureaus work with youth involved in the juvenile justice system and know that increasing supports to the youth and family as the youth transitions back home is important. The reentry specialists will connect the youth and family to important resources such as mental health, medical, educational and vocational programs and monitor the youth's progress until they reach the age of 18.

We believe that this action corresponds with the State's movement toward a juvenile system that is developmentally informed. A developmentally informed approach to juvenile justice recognizes the need to hold youth accountable for their actions while also offering them the resources and opportunities to divert them from future involvement with the juvenile justice system. This program will directly work to divert youth from further involvement by providing resources and connections in the community.

We respectfully ask you to **Support** this bill.

Respectfully Submitted:

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