

SUPPORT HB 1338 Felony Murder--Children

Dear Chairman Clippinger, Vice Chair Atterbeary and esteemed Judiciary members,

I urge you to give a favorable report to HB 1338 Felony Murder--Children. As you realize this bill would limit first-degree murder sentencing in cases where at the time of the offense the perpetrator was a juvenile.

I ask that you support this legislation because as a middle school teacher in Harford County for 17 years, I have observed the excitable and unpredictable behavior of children, particularly in confrontational situations. Due to their youth, children do not have the impulse control nor good judgement sufficient to make decisions which are in the best interest of themselves and others particularly in situations of intense confrontation.

Please consider assigning these children to prison programs that would help them grow toward rehabilitation. My prison ministry work of 12 years with Patapsco Quaker Friends Meeting, plus my work with Maryland Alliance for Justice Reform since 2015, has informed me that a long prison sentence in the company of veteran criminals does little to rehabilitate a young person.

Thank you for your long and sincere work to improve our Maryland communities.

Sincerely,

Rebecca Gardner
3145 E Nobles Mill Rd
Darlington, MD 21034