



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

Testimony on Senate Bill 406
Public Safety-Local Youth Violence Review Committees
Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee
February 11, 2021
POSITION: SUPPORT

The Maryland Association of Youth Service Bureaus (MAYSB) respectfully requests that you give Senate Bill 406 a favorable report, allowing counties to establish a Youth Violence Review Committee. This committee would broadly and comprehensively study a serious physical incident, or death of a youth; these incidents would include homicide, substantial risk of death, permanent disfigurement, or impairment.

The death of a child is a community responsibility. Through the specific lens of violence, these multi-disciplinary teams would better understand how and why these violence-related incidents occurred, use these findings to make recommendations to improve agency changes, and take action to improve the coordination of services among the community agencies. Information learned during the review can help teams have a clearer understanding of underlying risk factors and inequities that they may not identify otherwise. Simply put, this coordinated effort would seek to effectively identify gaps-in-service, and suggest needed strategies, to prevent future fatalities.

Those of us who have served on fatality review teams know the fundamental value of these multi-disciplinary teams. Fatality review teams are established for the express purpose of sharing information, having thoughtful discussion, and making recommendations for improvement. Confidentiality within the team is of the highest priority.

Through a comprehensive and multidisciplinary review of youth violence and homicides, communities will take a major step in improving the health and safety of our children, and our communities.

For these reasons, we ask you to support SB 406.

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