

Submitted by: Rev. Marlon B. Tilghman (a Harford County, MD Pastor, U.S. Marine Corps SSgt, retired commission '92), 1118 Marksworth Road, Gwynn Oak, Maryland 21207.

Dear Luke Clippinger and members of the House Judiciary Committee,

The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. said, *“The law cannot control how people regard each other, but it can mandate how people treat each other.”*

I ask that you vote in favor of HB1121 Juvenile Services Workgroup to Develop Evidence-Based, Research-Based, And Culturally Competent Practices. BRIDGE Maryland, Inc., which represents several of the legislative districts on this committee, and throughout the state are excited about a study that will finally solidify the need for juvenile justice reform. Although there are dozens of national studies that have proven this point already, hopefully this will help Maryland care for our children better. The results will produce judicial and social science prevention and intervention services delivered to children by the Department of Juvenile Services through evidence-based, research-based, and culturally competent practices. It will also require the workgroup to complete certain assessments and publish inventories to improve practices that are working well or need to be improved for the welfare of our children.

To treat children and youth like adults with similar or lesser crimes is an inditement of their potential and sacred worth. Therefore, this workgroup should uncover what the community already knows and that is more police does not reduce crime, support services and counseling does.

Therefore, we urge you to vote in favor of HB1121. Our children need counseling and care, not cages.

Sincerely,

Marlon Tilghman

Rev. Marlon B. Tilghman,
Co-Chair of BRIDGE Maryland, Inc., Criminal Justice and Education Workgroup