



## TESTIMONY FOR HB0459 Juvenile Justice Reform

**Bill Sponsor:** Delegate Clippinger

**Committee:** Judiciary

**Organization Submitting:** Maryland Legislative Coalition

**Person Submitting:** Cecilia Plante, co-chair

**Position:** FAVORABLE

I am submitting this testimony in favor of HB0459 on behalf of the Maryland Legislative Coalition. The Maryland Legislative Coalition is an association of activists - individuals and grassroots groups in every district in the state. We are unpaid citizen lobbyists, and our Coalition supports well over 30,000 members.

There are important reasons to reform our juvenile justice system. We intake far too many of our youth into the system and our laws regarding juveniles lean heavily into incarceration vs probation. We are even putting young children.

This bill makes changes to the intake process for juveniles, the risk scoring process used to determine eligibility for release before a hearing, the length of time that a juvenile will remain in detention before a hearing, the process of placing a juvenile on probation, and even creates a Juvenile Justice Reform and Best Practices Commission.

These changes are all necessary and long overdue. We desperately need to overhaul our entire criminal justice system and stop putting so many people behind bars – starting with our children.

We support this bill and recommend a **FAVORABLE** report in committee.