



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

Testimony on Senate Bill 691

Juvenile Justice Reform

Judiciary Committee

March 3, 2022

POSITON: SUPPORT

The Maryland Association of Youth Service Bureaus, which represents a statewide network of bureaus throughout the State of Maryland, **Supports** Senate Bill 691—Juvenile Justice Reform. SB691 will allow altering provisions of law relating to the jurisdiction of the juvenile court, the juvenile intake process, the placement of a child in detention or community detention and specifying the authority of the court to place a child on probation, and the length of probation, under certain circumstances.

Youth Service Bureaus work with youth involved in the juvenile justice system and know that lessening a youth's contact with courts is in line with the Developmental Model of Juvenile Justice, a model Maryland has been following for many years. In the Developmental Model, fairness is considered and, thus, sanctions should be proportionate in severity to the harm caused by the offense and the culpability of the offender.

This bill would provide for what is in the best interest of the public and the child. Youthful offenders are sometimes moved forward to the courts before all information about a case, including the youth's degree of involvement, and other circumstances are understood. Additionally, this bill would give discretion to a court to waive a child back to DJS for an informal adjustment. This ensures that the level of court involvement is in line with the severity of the offense and the culpability of the youth.

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

Respectfully Submitted:

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