

MARYLAND JUDICIAL CONFERENCE
GOVERNMENT RELATIONS AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Hon. Joseph M. Getty
Chief Judge

187 Harry S. Truman Parkway
Annapolis, MD 21401

MEMORANDUM

TO: House Judiciary Committee
FROM: Legislative Committee
Suzanne D. Pelz, Esq.
410-260-1523
RE: House Bill 121
Juvenile Court Jurisdiction – Peace Orders - Repeal
DATE: January 12, 2022
(1/27)
POSITION: Oppose

The Maryland Judiciary opposes House Bill 121. This bill would remove from the jurisdiction of the juvenile court any peace order proceeding in which the respondent is a juvenile. It would repeal Court & Judicial Proceedings Article (CJP), § 3–8A–19.1 through § 3–8A–19.5, the provisions of law that establish the situations that could constitute a juvenile peace order case, and establish the processes and procedures to be followed in those cases. The bill would repeal other provisions of CJP Title 3, Subtitle 8A and Family Law Article, § 4-501(b) which address juvenile peace order proceedings.

This is inconsistent with the best practices towards the treatment of cases involving children, and of the best interests of children, to terminate juvenile court jurisdiction over peace order cases. Adult domestic violence courts have neither the training nor the time to appropriately handle these juvenile matters. Jurisdiction is best left in the juvenile court where they have the necessary and best resources to help the needs of juveniles. It is also unclear what enforcement authority the District Court would have over a juvenile if a juvenile violates a peace order.

cc. Hon. Jon Cardin
Judicial Council
Legislative Committee
Kelley O'Connor