

CROSSOVER BILL SB0744\_RichardKaplowitz\_UNF  
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**TESTIMONY ON CROSSOVER BILL SB#0744 - POSITION: UNFAVORABLE**  
**Juvenile Law – Reform**

**TO:** Chair Clippinger, Vice Chair Bartlett, and members of the Judiciary Committee

**FROM:** Richard Keith Kaplowitz

**My name is Richard Kaplowitz. I am a resident of District 3. I am submitting this testimony in opposition to CROSSOVER BILL SB#0744, Juvenile Law – Reform**

This bill is an attempt to respond to concerns about a perceived increase in juvenile crime. However, instead of looking for justice and fairness and rehabilitation it leans heavily into punishment and refuses to look for solutions that heal a community and its minor children to resolve issues in criminal justice.

Is an elementary school age child in need of guidance and intervention – this bill puts that young person into the juvenile court system instead of mental health and counseling treatment. What purpose is served by incarceration of juveniles before their case is adjudicated when the offense charged is only a misdemeanor? Why is the involvement of the States Attorney Office to be required or permitted bypassing the Department of Juvenile Services which can interdict and provide services that keep young people out of incarceration and get them the help they need to turn away from criminal behavior and become productive citizens? How is informed supervision of that minor judged less effective than creating a criminal record that will impact the future life of the minor for the rest of their lives? How does expanded probation when circumstances outside the minor’s control, as determined by their counselors, makes them late or miss mandated appointments in a treatment environment? Why not mandate help to that child to correct underlying causes impacting their participation in their rehabilitation?

This bill will attempt to address the fears of juvenile crime by dealing as harshly as possible without consideration of the age and maturity level of the minor. It is punitive, not rehabilitative. My Jewish faith teaches me that “Acting justly is a joy for the righteous but it terrifies evildoers. “ (Proverbs 21:15) This bill calls on the state to act justly and pursue righteousness, especially to towards our children who need to be put on the right path without damaging their futures.

**I respectfully urge this committee to return an unfavorable report on CROSSOVER BILL SB0744.**