



**TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION TO SB0792**

**Juvenile Law - Juvenile Justice Reform - Juvenile Court Jurisdiction**

**\*\* OPPOSE\*\***

February 28, 2024

**TO:** Senator William C. Smith, Chair, Senator Jeff Waldstreicher, Co- Chair and the members of the House Judiciary Committee

**FROM:** Rev. Linda K. Boyd., Co-Chair, Maryland Episcopal Public Policy Network, Diocese of Maryland

**DATE:** February 28, 2024

The Episcopal Church at large and the Diocese of Maryland in particular have embraced the concept of reparations, a concept not limited to financial considerations but to a leveling of the playing field across a broad spectrum of issues, including juvenile justice. Research shows that juveniles who are incarcerated make them more likely to be arrested for new offenses. Because Black and brown children are more likely to be incarcerated, this Bill will exacerbate the serious racial disparities in Maryland's juvenile justice system. We believe that placing the burden on the juvenile without addressing the underlying causes of racial disparities cannot be tolerated. Addressing the underlying causes is long overdue. Every ten years or so, there is a push for "law and order" that is a band aid only and does not try to remedy or repair that damage done by years of slavery, Jim Crow, red-lining, etc.

Rather than putting the burden on the child, addressing the underlying causes would be a step in repairing (reparations) the damage done by a decades long policy of mass incarcerations.

The Diocese of Maryland requests an unfavorable report.