

Date of Hearing: February 9, 2024

Barbara Schaffer
Rockville, MD 2050

TESTIMONY ON SB#0744-UNFAVORABLE
Juvenile Law-Reform

TO: Chair Smith, Vice Chair Waldstreicher, and members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee

FROM: Barbara Schaffer

OPENING: My name is Barbara Schaffer. I am a resident of District 17. I am submitting this testimony against SB#0744, Juvenile Law-Reform.

I am a concerned citizen about justice for Maryland's children. Along with adults, children deserve a life with dignity, respect, and safety.

This bill undermines several important provisions of the Juvenile Justice Restoration Act and ignores over 20 years of research and data on the most effective ways to hold kids accountable and improve safety.

Instead of investing in programming and services that are proven to change behavior, this legislation will make us less safe by punishing children who need support and giving a pass to our state's dysfunctional law enforcement and juvenile justice systems.

This legislation will see thousands more children incarcerated every year, particularly Black and brown children, exacerbating already serious racial disparities in the juvenile justice system.

I respectfully urge this committee to return an unfavorable report on SB#-0744.