



Maryland Chiefs of Police Association

Maryland Sheriffs' Association



MEMORANDUM

TO: The Honorable Luke Clippinger Chair and
Members of the Judiciary Committee

FROM: Darren Popkin, Executive Director, MCPA-MSA Joint Legislative Committee
Andrea Mansfield, Representative, MCPA-MSA Joint Legislative Committee
Natasha Mehu, Representative, MCPA-MSA Joint Legislative Committee

DATE: February 22, 2024

RE: **HB 1248 Juvenile Law – Questioning of a Juvenile – Crime of Violence or Crime
Involving a Firearm**

POSITION: **SUPPORT**

The Maryland Chiefs of Police Association (MCPA) and the Maryland Sheriffs' Association (MSA) offer this statement in **SUPPORT** of a handful of bills that have been introduced to fix the state's broken juvenile justice system.

This past year the state has seen a spike in juvenile crimes that have left communities in fear and officials frustrated. Throughout the interim, meetings and briefings were held in local communities and Annapolis in an attempt to sort out the issues and propose solutions. Law enforcement has either participated in or closely followed these discussions. It became apparent that there was not one failing. There are gaps in the system, broken lines of communication and coordination, and a lack of necessary resources and services. The solutions must strike a balance between ensuring that juveniles receive the support and services they need and face the appropriate level of accountability for their actions.

This statement is in support of bills that have been introduced to address those problems and strike that balance. These include adjusting the age and crimes for which youth are subject to the jurisdiction of the juvenile courts. Expanding juvenile probation terms and conditions. Providing more resources, treatment, and services to juveniles in need. Improving communication, data sharing, and coordination between the Department of Juvenile Services, the state's attorneys' offices, and law enforcement agencies. From start to finish, the processes and procedures for handling juveniles involved in crime must be improved. These proposals are all a step in the right direction.

The solution for the rise in juvenile crime is not one-size-fits-all. It will involve closing gaps, improving communication and collaboration, and increasing resources and services. All stakeholders must play their part to fix the system. For these reasons, MCPA and MSA urge a **FAVORABLE** report on **HB 1248**.