

NICHOLAUS R. KIPKE  
Legislative District 31  
Anne Arundel County

Health and Government  
Operations Committee

*Subcommittees*

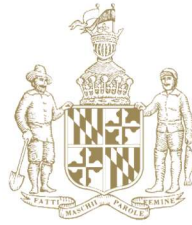
Government Operations and  
Health Facilities

Insurance and Pharmaceuticals

Rules and Executive  
Nominations Committee

Joint Committee on  
Legislative Ethics

Joint Committee on Cybersecurity,  
Information Technology,  
and Biotechnology



The Maryland House of Delegates  
6 Bladen Street, Room 165  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
410-841-3421 · 301-858-3421  
800-492-7122 Ext. 3421  
Nicholaus.Kipke@house.state.md.us

*The Maryland House of Delegates*  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Tuesday, February 6, 2024

## HB319 - Juvenile Justice Restoration Act of 2024

Dear Chairman, Vice Chairman, and Honorable Members,

I present to you today with Delegate Kathy Szeliga and other cosponsors HB319 titled the Juvenile Justice Restoration Act of 2024. This bill seeks to address the concerns shared by many throughout the state related to the troubling and dangerous crimes committed by youth in our communities which have increased substantially in recent years.

Reform is urgently needed, as violent juvenile crime has seen a dramatic increase in the state in recent years. In the past 3 years, youth gun violations rose 220%, carjackings involving minors spiked 85%, and auto theft by juveniles increased 65%, according to the state's Department of Juvenile Services (DJS). SOURCE: <https://wjla.com/news/local/juvenile-crime-remains-top-priority-as-maryland-general-assembly-reconvenes-justice-reform-children-education-students-kids-violent-crime-gun-violence-law-carjackings>

Additionally, reported by the Washington Post in September of last year, that "...during the same time, carjackings increased by 85.4 percent and handgun violations rose by 220 percent. The data shows a surge in auto theft offenses, more than doubling from 545 to 1,193 between the last two fiscal years. "The concerning part for us is the categories of youth crime that are up, which includes handgun crimes, carjackings, and auto theft," said Prince George's County State's Attorney Aisha Braveboy (D), who was briefed on the data late last week. "I think those are the areas that we need to focus on to impact juvenile crime, guns in particular." SOURCE: <https://www.washingtonpost.com/dc-md-va/2023/09/12/maryland-youth-crime-down/>

HB319 does the following:

1) Interrogation

- Police & State’s Attorneys have requested parental consent as a substitute for the required consultation with an attorney which is provided by this legislation.

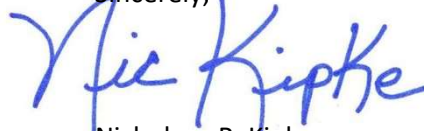
2) Juvenile Justice Reform:

- Kids under 13 who use firearms in the commission of a crime will come under the jurisdiction of the juvenile court system, also attempted last year in HB753 Gun Offenses (Juvenile Gun Offenses Accountability Act of 2023).
- Provide that upon the child’s third arrest for a crime that does not fall within the category of “crimes of violence”, or a crime committed with a firearm, the child will come under the jurisdiction of the juvenile court system.

There are several amendments to the bill that we will discuss.

I realize that the Speaker has introduced legislation related to reforms in this area, which I support and believe it will help to remedy some aspects of the issues we seek to improve in HB319. There must be accountability to stop the dangerous crimes being committed by juveniles in our state and to protect our loved ones.

Sincerely,



Nicholaus R. Kipke