



Maryland Chiefs of Police Association

Maryland Sheriffs' Association



MEMORANDUM

TO: The Honorable William C. Smith Jr., Chair and
Members of the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee

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

DATE: February 7, 2025

RE: **SB 531 - Juvenile Law - Custodial Interrogation (Juvenile Justice
Restoration Act of 2025)**

POSITION: **SUPPORT**

The Maryland Chiefs of Police Association (MCPA) and the Maryland Sheriffs' Association (MSA) SUPPORT SB 531. This bill will allow a law enforcement officer to conduct a lawful custodial interrogation without an attorney present if the child's parent, guardian, or custodian consent.

Throughout the past few years, the state has seen a spike in juvenile crimes that have left communities in fear and officials frustrated. Meetings have been 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.

Currently, custodial interrogation is prohibited unless the child has consulted an attorney and the child's parents have been notified. The Juvenile Justice Restoration Act strikes a necessary balance between ensuring the rights of juveniles are protected and that law enforcement is able to effectively carry out their duties.

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 SB 531.

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