

**HB #1433**

Miner L. (Moe) Brown

**Favorable**

**Title: Juvenile Court-Jurisdiction**

Judiciary Committee: Chair, Luke Clippinger and  
Vice-Chair, Sandy Bartlett

Testimony submitted by Miner L (Moe) Brown of District 11

A CASA Ally, Active in City Scouting for years, former Habitat for Humanity volunteer for 9+ Years,  
Years, and Member, Social Advocacy Committee at Chizuk Amuno Congregation, Pikesville, MD

First, thank you for leading the discussion of this important bill, (HB#1433). In many ways this legislation follows previous enactments over the last four years, but now recognizes ways in which a better balance of firm justice can be employed; it could still go further in correcting the existing law.

Goals for any new legislation need to deal with juvenile justice issues expressed below:

1. **A shocking statistic-** Maryland sends more youth to adult court based on offense types; more than any other state per capita in the country except Alabama! Is this where Maryland belongs?
2. **Charging kids as adults is short-sided and has continually led to poor results.** Youth incarceration increases the likelihood of recidivism and harms their educational attainment, life me wages, and future health outcomes as adults. Continuing to operate under the same failed system, on-going costs to the State continue to rise and a kid's future life is lost, gone-a statistic of the "System";
3. **Automatically charging all youth in adult court absolutely ignores solid research** that shows adolescent brains are still developing and have some years before they reach maturity; and
4. **Properly fund the Juvenile Division of the Office of Public Defender (JDOPD).** They know their job. They have evidence-based successes while functioning under unnecessary monetary handicaps. Their results are measurable. Take some of the saved money from eliminating jail me before arraignment, and put it here to enhance the success of JDOPD expanded role.

Current practice of automatically charging children as adults puts these kids directly into adult detention facilities. More than a half-decade of falling youth arrests and declining rates of youth incarceration had occurred by 2020 while the average per day state cost of secure youth confinement was calculated to be over \$588. With the number of average days of initial confinement now at 103 days, the cost per youth is over \$60,600. before arraignment. Only 12% of teenagers tried as adults were convicted in 2022. What a waste of financial and human resources!

**It is time to treat kids like kids like the overwhelming majority of other states who have passed laws.** Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony as a concerned long me resident of Maryland and 84- year-old voter with a professional career in health care management who is very concerned with the future success of all of our youth.