



City of Bowie

15901 Fred Robinson Way
Bowie, Maryland 20716

Testimony submitted to House Judiciary Committee

Support

February 26, 2025

HB 814- Department of Juvenile Services - Report on Youth Service Bureaus.

The City of Bowie supports HB 814 – Department of Juvenile Services - Report on Youth Service Bureaus.

HB 814 asks the Department of Juvenile Services (DJS) to provide a report outlining the Department's collaboration with local governments in the funding and establishment of Youth Service Bureaus (YSBs), and to report on the ongoing partnership between DJS and YSBs on the prevention of delinquency.

The network of YSBs was designed to be community-based and to partner with local schools, faith-based organizations, and local government to enhance the health, safety and well-being of Maryland's children, youth and families. The success of YSBs can be attributed to their prevention, community-based, family-focused approach to the development of a young person and their family's protective factors.

The City of Bowie has successfully partnered with the State in the funding of the City of Bowie's Youth Service Bureau for the past 54 years. The agency provides counseling services, parenting classes, psycho-educational groups, crisis intervention services, mentoring, and school-based intervention and prevention programs for hundreds of our local youth each year. Bowie's YSB staff members do highly effective work and are a vital part of the system of care for our youth who are experiencing mental health or behavior issues.

HB 814 would strengthen the longstanding connection between DJS and Youth Service Bureaus at this time when community services are most needed. Again, YSBs are known for providing effective mental health and prevention services. In fact, **95% of youth** served in formal counseling by a YSB do **NOT** enter the juvenile justice system 2 years after counseling has concluded.

We respectfully ask you to support this bill.

MAYOR Timothy J. Adams

MAYOR PRO TEM Dufour Woolfley

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