



## **TESTIMONY FOR HB0165**

### **Custodial Interrogation of Minors Admissibility of Statements**

**Bill Sponsor:** Delegate Acevero

**Committee:** Judiciary

**Organization Submitting:** Maryland Legislative Coalition

**Person Submitting:** Aileen Alex, co-chair

**Position:** FAVORABLE

I am submitting this testimony in favor of HB0165 on behalf of the Maryland Legislative Coalition. The Maryland Legislative Coalition is an association of activists - individuals and grassroots groups in every district in the state. We are unpaid citizen lobbyists, and our Coalition supports well over 30,000 members.

HB0165 is an essential additional Miranda right for children. It unequivocally prevents a child's responses to false information—lies—used by police during interrogation from appearing in court. The primary goal of HB0165 is to protect minors from coercive interrogation tactics. Any statements made by children under such circumstances cannot be used against them in court unless it can be clearly proven that the statement was made voluntarily and not in response to false information.

This law is a cornerstone in protecting Maryland children, plain and simple. Children have an innate trust in authorities, and a presumption of truth is easily given. Without this law, interrogators could exploit this tendency by using lies to achieve a predetermined outcome.

HB0165 places children on a more equal footing with adults during interrogation. We must ensure that children have the same rights and privileges as adults and safeguard them from intimidation that could compromise their futures.

The Maryland Legislative Coalition supports this bill and we recommend a FAVORABLE report in Committee.