



## MARYLAND LEGISLATIVE LATINO CAUCUS

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TO: Delegate Luke Clippinger, Chair  
Delegate Sandy J. Bartlett, Vice Chair  
Judiciary Committee Members  
FROM: Maryland Legislative Latino Caucus  
DATE: February 13, 2025  
RE: HB522 – Department of Juvenile Services – Rehabilitation Services – Funding

### **The MLLC supports HB522 – Department of Juvenile Services – Rehabilitation Services – Funding**

The MLLC is a bipartisan group of Senators and Delegates committed to supporting legislation that improves the lives of Latinos throughout our state. The MLLC is a crucial voice in the development of public policy that uplifts the Latino community and benefits the state of Maryland. Thank you for allowing us the opportunity to express our support of HB522.

The bill authorizes the Maryland Department of Juvenile Services (DJS) to provide funding for up to six months of rehabilitation services at State juvenile diagnostic, training, detention, and rehabilitation institutions. The goal is to provide immediate support to vulnerable children—especially those facing challenges such as homelessness, lack of parental involvement, or lack of identification—addressing both their health needs and the underlying issues contributing to truancy and delinquency. In addition, the Department is tasked with providing technical assistance to identify alternative funding sources for pre-delinquent programs.

This bill addresses critical issues of rehabilitation and diversion within the juvenile justice system, where Latino youth are disproportionately affected.<sup>1</sup> Providing rehabilitation services allows for more equitable access to resources that can help address underlying challenges faced by Latino youth, such as systemic disparities and barriers to support services. Additionally, these pre-delinquent diversion programs align with the Caucus's mission to advocate for policies that reduce incarceration rates and promote positive outcomes for Latino families. By prioritizing youth rehabilitation, the bill supports efforts to create a fairer and more supportive juvenile justice system for Latino communities.

For these reasons, the Maryland Legislative Latino Caucus respectfully requests a favorable report on HB522.

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<sup>1</sup> [Rovner, Joshua. "Racial Disparities in Youth Incarceration Persist." \*The Sentencing Project\*, 27 Mar. 2023.](#)