



OFFICE OF THE STATE'S ATTORNEY FOR BALTIMORE CITY

February 26, 2025

The Honorable Luke Clippinger  
Chair, Judiciary Committee  
House Office Building  
6 Bladen Street  
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: Support of HB1442 – Juveniles - Truancy Reduction Pilot Programs - Report

Dear Chairman Clippinger and Honorable Members of the Committee,

I am writing to express my strong support for HB1442, which requires the Maryland Judiciary to report its findings and recommendations on Truancy Reduction Pilot Programs to the General Assembly by December 1, 2026. As Baltimore City's State's Attorney, I want to thank Delegate Edelson for offering up this important legislation on behalf of the citizens of Baltimore City.

As a government agency whose mission is to keep the public safe and prosecute crime, I also believe it is my duty to ensure that our youth are given every tool possible to ensure that they don't wind up in the criminal justice system at an early age. I believe this bill is crucial for improving our school system and ensuring that our youth remain in school and out of the criminal justice system.

House Bill 1442 mandates a comprehensive evaluation of the impact and effectiveness of Truancy Reduction Pilot Programs. This initiative is a vital step in addressing the growing issue of juvenile crime by assessing and enhancing these programs to improve their outcomes. When this program was first proposed and implemented, I understand that the CINS petition may have been one then that may be more effective than what we see today; however, I would argue that Baltimore City deserves the same programming as the jurisdictions who are given this critically important truancy reduction programming.

The last study on the Truancy Reduction Pilot Program was conducted in 2011 and much has changed since then. In 2013, 29 victims under the age of 18 were killed; by 2022, that number had more than doubled to 47. Non-fatal shootings among juveniles have also surged from 41 in 2013 to 171 in 2022. Given these alarming statistics, we must reassess our strategies and allocate resources effectively to address this pressing public safety concern.



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I urge you to give a favorable report on HB1442 to ensure that we take the necessary steps to protect and uplift the youth of Baltimore City through education and opportunity. This report and the subsequent programming being done by the courts should be one of several tools we take to effectively and efficiently deal with the very real issue of truancy in our schools. I urge your favorable vote on this important policy. Thank you.

Sincerely,

*Ivan J Bates*

Ivan J. Bates  
State's Attorney for Baltimore City

Submitted By: Hassan Giordano  
Chief, External Affairs Division