



LEGISLATIVE BLACK CAUCUS OF MARYLAND, INC.

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The Legislative Black Caucus of Maryland offers its strong and favorable support for House Bill 165 (HB165) – Custodial Interrogation of Minors – Admissibility of Statements, cross-filed as Senate Bill 512 (SB0512). This bill establishes a rebuttable presumption that a statement made by a minor during a custodial interrogation is involuntary and inadmissible in court if law enforcement intentionally used false information to elicit such statements. By protecting minors from deceptive interrogation tactics, HB165/SB0512 addresses a long-standing issue in Maryland’s criminal justice system that disproportionately impacts Black youth.

Black Marylanders are more likely to be incarcerated due to racial profiling and deceptive policing practices, which have fostered deep mistrust of law enforcement within our communities. Current law allows police officers to misrepresent evidence to pressure individuals—especially young people—into making false confessions, leading to wrongful convictions that devastate Black families. Minors, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds, are especially vulnerable to these tactics, often believing they have no choice but to comply with misleading interrogations. HB165/SB0512 seeks to dismantle these coercive practices by ensuring that false or misleading statements from law enforcement cannot be used to manipulate minors into self-incrimination. This bill is a critical step toward creating a fairer justice system that prioritizes truth, accountability, and the protection of our youth.

By preventing the use of deceptive interrogation tactics against minors, HB165/SB0512 will help reduce wrongful convictions, keep Black children out of the school-to-prison pipeline, and reinforce the integrity of Maryland’s legal system. Ensuring that confessions are obtained fairly will not only protect Black youth but also help rebuild trust between law enforcement and the communities they serve. Black Marylanders deserve a justice system that upholds their rights and treats them with dignity.

For these reasons, the Legislative Black Caucus of Maryland strongly supports HB165/SB0512.

Legislative Black Caucus of Maryland