



LEGISLATIVE BLACK CAUCUS OF MARYLAND, INC.

The Maryland House of Delegates, 6 Bladen Street, Room 300, Annapolis, Maryland 21401

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The Legislative Black Caucus of Maryland offers its strong and favorable support for **House Bill 522 (HB 522) / Senate Bill LR 1329 - Department of Juvenile Services - Rehabilitation Services - Funding**. This bill authorizes the Department of Juvenile Services (DJS) to provide funding for up to 12 months of rehabilitation services, doubling the current six-month limit. It also allows DJS to fund up to six months of out-of-state detox services for vulnerable youth, particularly those who are financially insecure, homeless, or lack parental support. By streamlining the intake process and removing administrative barriers, HB 522 / LR 1329 ensures that children in crisis—many of whom are Black—receive critical rehabilitation services that prevent long-term entanglement in the juvenile justice system.

Black youth in Maryland are disproportionately affected by systemic inequities in both the juvenile justice and healthcare systems. Too often, Black children face limited access to community-based intervention programs, prolonged legal involvement, and a lack of comprehensive rehabilitative care. By expanding funding for both in-state and out-of-state rehabilitation services, HB 522 / LR 1329 directly addresses these racial disparities, ensuring that youth facing substance use disorders, trauma, and unstable living conditions receive the support they need to heal and reintegrate into their communities. Additionally, the bill fosters collaboration between health, education, and juvenile services, improving coordinated care for youth at critical moments in their development.

By investing in long-term rehabilitation rather than punitive measures, HB 522 / LR 1329 promotes justice, equity, and better outcomes for Black youth across Maryland. Extending funding for essential services helps reduce recidivism, strengthens families, and provides young people with the resources necessary to break cycles of poverty, addiction, and incarceration. Ensuring equitable access to detox and rehabilitation services is a crucial step toward dismantling systemic barriers that disproportionately harm Black communities.

For these reasons, the Legislative Black Caucus of Maryland strongly supports HB 522 / LR 1329.

Legislative Black Caucus of Maryland