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Prince George's County

Judiciary Committee
Criminal Subcommittee
Chair, Juvenile Subcommittee
Public Safety Subcommittee



The Maryland House of Delegates
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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Testimony for HB23 - Motor Vehicle Administration - Identification Cards - Issuance to Minors

Good afternoon, Chair Korman, Vice Chair Guyton, and esteemed members of the Environment and Transportation Committee.

My name is Delegate Jamila Woods, and I am here today to request a favorable report on **House Bill 23**, legislation that improves access to State issued identification cards for minors by removing unnecessary procedural barriers while maintaining compliance with federal law.

Access to a State issued identification card is foundational. For young people, it often determines whether they can enroll in school programs, apply for jobs, access health care, secure housing services, or participate fully in their communities. Yet for many minors, particularly those who are unhoused, in foster care, estranged from parents, or living in unstable family situations, current Motor Vehicle Administration requirements make obtaining an ID unnecessarily difficult.

This issue was brought to our attention during the 2025 session by **O'Marie Barnes**, who experienced firsthand the shortcomings this bill seeks to address. His experience highlighted how rigid requirements, such as mandatory parental presence or co signature, can unintentionally exclude minors who are otherwise eligible but lack consistent adult support. HB23 responds directly to those realities by allowing minors who are at least 15 years old to apply independently and by expanding the types of documentation that may be used to establish residency.

House Bill 23 does not weaken safeguards. It modernizes policy to reflect real world circumstances. The bill requires the Motor Vehicle Administration to adopt clear regulations identifying acceptable forms of residency documentation, including school records, child welfare agency records, court documents, and documentation from homeless service providers. These are records which already exist and are routinely relied upon in other contexts to establish identity and residency.

Importantly, HB23 preserves Maryland's commitment to federal compliance. When a minor is unable to meet the requirements of the federal REAL ID Act, the Administration retains the authority to issue a non-REAL ID compliant identification card. This ensures the State remains compliant with federal law while still providing minors with access to essential identification.

I would also like to recognize **Delegate Vaughn Stewart**, who previously served on this committee. His leadership and support were instrumental in helping our office navigate the complexities of REAL ID compliance while ensuring the State continued to serve vulnerable populations with care and flexibility. His guidance reinforced that compliance and access can coexist.

House Bill 23 reflects that balance. It acknowledges the administrative needs of the State while ensuring young people are not denied basic identification due to circumstances beyond their control.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the committee to issue a favorable report on House Bill 23.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jamila J. Woods". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being the most prominent.

Delegate Jamila J. Woods
Maryland House of Delegates
District 26 – Prince George's County