

Maryland Alliance for Justice Reform

Working together for a criminal justice system that better serves our communities



To: Chair Will Smith and Judicial Proceedings Committee members
From: Bill Carlson and Jenny Zito, MAJR Executive Committee
Subject: UNF - **SB0737 - Parental Accountability Act**

February 25, 2026

The Maryland Alliance for Justice Reform (MAJR) asks you to oppose SB 0737, which would require certain children to be put on probation and would require parents to participate in probation and rehabilitative services.

While it may seem logical that increased parental participation in probation and rehabilitative services would improve the outcomes of these services, SB 0737 is likely to have unintended consequences that will burden some of Maryland's most economically disadvantaged families, who are already facing systemic challenges. As the Office of Public Defender has pointed out in past testimony, there are other statutes that already have sufficient coverage in this area. SB 0737 will also increase the number of children interacting with the criminal justice system and could exacerbate racial and socioeconomic disparities already evident in our criminal justice system.

A better approach to the problem of repeated delinquency would be to provide wrap-around services to families in need, such as in-home counseling ; community-based mentoring; school-based intervention; and additional supports for the family.

The Maryland Alliance for Justice Reform (MAJR) is a nonpartisan, all-volunteer organization of nearly 2000 Marylanders who advocate for sensible evidence-based legislative and policy changes in Maryland's correctional practices. MAJR thanks you for the opportunity to provide input on this legislation and urges the committee to give SB 0737 an unfavorable report.

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