

January 28, 2026

**Written Testimony on HB 409
Juvenile Court – Jurisdiction (Youth Charging Reform Act)
Judicial Proceedings**

Position: Favorable

My name is Julie A. Rosen, and I submit this written testimony as an individual resident of Montgomery County, Maryland. I write to affirm my support of the subject proposed legislation, and urge the Committee to pass it to enact protections for children not accused of violent and/or felonious crimes.

I was astounded to learn that MD charges more children as adults per capita than any state other than Alabama. Additionally, I was saddened, even appalled, but not surprised, to learn that 8 of 9 such children are black or brown. I firmly believe that our state's charging protocol is unfair, inefficient, and costly. This belief is supported by the latest independent audit that 85% of these cases are moved back to juvenile system or dropped. But that process results in a child having spent 8-9 months in adult jail; damaging the likelihood of future behavior changes, especially when the child may not have committed criminal behavior.

As I understand the evidence underlying the Bill's offering, the protections outlined in this bill would keep the most violent charges in adult court. But for the lesser charges, MD would save \$30M/yr, which could be used to invest in pro-active measures that reduce harm to child's future (behavior, actions).

To protect children of lesser –or unproved!–charges, this Bill's approach to cost efficiency, and mitigate against harm to child's future, I respectfully urge a favorable report on HB 409. Thank you.