



## MARYLAND LEGISLATIVE LATINO CAUCUS

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TO: Delegate J. Sandy Bartlett, Chair  
Delegate Debra Davis, Vice Chair  
Judiciary Committee Members  
FROM: Maryland Legislative Latino Caucus  
DATE: 2/19/2026  
RE: HB0626 - Custodial Interrogation of Minors - Admissibility  
of Statements (Exonerated 5 Act)

### **The MLLC supports HB0626 - Custodial Interrogation of Minors - Admissibility of Statements (Exonerated 5 Act)**

The MLLC is a bipartisan group of Senators and Delegates committed to supporting legislation that improves the lives of Latinos throughout our state. The MLLC is a crucial voice in the development of public policy that uplifts the Latino community and benefits the state of Maryland. Thank you for allowing us the opportunity to express our support of HB0626.

In general, custodial interrogations carry inherent risks due their coercive nature and tactics such as presenting false evidence, using intense psychological pressures, and purposefully prolonging interrogations. In particular, data shows that children subject to these interrogations waive their rights a shocking 90% of the time.<sup>1</sup> Additional data shows that 29% of DNA exonerations from 1989-2020 involved false confessions and that 49% of the false confessors were 21 years old or younger, and 31% were 18 or younger.<sup>2</sup> These custodial interrogations particularly impact the Latino youth, who not only face extra pressures as minors, but also face language barriers, apprehension toward law enforcement, and concerns related to immigration status.

These factors significantly prejudice Latino minors by increasing the likelihood of falling victim to the various pressures of custodial interrogations. This bill would establish a clear rule that there is a rebuttable presumption that a statement made by a minor is false in cases where police officers intentionally use false information to elicit statements. By setting in place this presumption this legislation would help to promote due process of law, ensure that law enforcement is held accountable for knowingly engaging in coercive tactics, and generally see that Latino youth within Maryland's criminal justice system are adequately protected.

For these reasons, the Maryland Legislative Latino Caucus respectfully requests a favorable report on HB0626.

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<sup>1</sup> [Child Interrogation Protection Act Goes into Effect Saturday - ACLU of Maryland](#)

<sup>2</sup> [DNA Exonerations in the United States \(1989 – 2020\) - Innocence Project](#)