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TO: Delegate J. Sandy Bartlett, Chair  
Delegate Debra Davis, Vice Chair  
Judiciary Committee Members

FROM: Maryland Legislative Asian American and Pacific-Islander Caucus

DATE: 3/10/2026

RE: HB0626 - Custodial Interrogation of Minors - Admissibility of  
Statements (Exonerated 5 Act)

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

The Maryland Legislative Asian American and Pacific Islander Caucus represents AAPI communities in the General Assembly and works to advance their legislative priorities. The Caucus respectfully supports HB0626, the Exonerated 5 Act, to strengthen protections for minors during custodial interrogations.

HB0626 establishes a rebuttable presumption that a statement made by a minor during a custodial interrogation is involuntary and inadmissible in a juvenile or criminal proceeding if a law enforcement officer intentionally used information known to be false to elicit the statement. The bill creates an important safeguard against coercive interrogation practices that can lead to unreliable statements from children.

For Asian American and Pacific Islander youth and families, these protections matter. All children are especially vulnerable during custodial interrogations, and deceptive tactics can increase confusion, fear, and pressure to comply. When false statements are used to obtain admissions from minors, the risk of wrongful involvement in the justice system increases, with lasting consequences for young people and their families. Stronger protections help promote fairness and accountability while recognizing the unique vulnerability of minors in these high-pressure situations.

HB0626 is a practical step toward a more just and reliable juvenile and criminal legal system. By discouraging deceptive interrogation practices and protecting minors from involuntary statements, the bill will help reduce the risk of false confessions and improve confidence in legal outcomes.

For these reasons, the Maryland Legislative Asian-American and Pacific-Islander Caucus respectfully requests a favorable report on HB0626.