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TO: The Honorable William C. Smith, Jr.
Chair, Judicial Proceedings Committee

FROM: Hannibal G. Williams II Kemerer
Chief Counsel, Legislative Affairs, Office of the Attorney General

RE: SB0905 – Juvenile Services – Workgroup to Develop Evidence-Based, Research-Based, and Culturally Competent Practices – **(Support)**

The Office of Attorney General urges a favorable report on SB 905, Senator Sydnor's bill to require the Department of Juvenile Services (DJS) to convene a workgroup to increase accountability for prevention and intervention services DJS delivers to children through evidence-based, research-based, and culturally competent practices. The workgroup is tasked with completing its assessment of DJS and to, by September 1, 2022, provide the General Assembly recommended strategies, timelines, and budgetary needs for increasing the use of evidence-based, research-based, and culturally competent practices in prevention and intervention services delivered to children. Finally, the legislation is set to take effect on October 1, 2021, and sunset at the end of June 30, 2023, without further action from the General Assembly.

Senate Bill 905 is consistent with the Juvenile Justice Reform Council recommendation that would "[r]equire DJS to provide a quality, evidence-based programming for detained youth, at least 3 hours on school-days and 6 hours on non-school days. This should include a requirement for structured activities . . . planned for every weekend, including activities that engage family members every other weekend."¹

We urge a favorable report on SB 905.

cc: Members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee

¹ *Juv. Just. Reform Council, JJRC Recommendations – Detention* (Nov. 19, 2020), <http://dls.maryland.gov/pubs/prod/NoPblTabMtg/CmsnJuvRefCncl/JJRC-Recommendations-Detention-11-19-2020.pdf>.