



BALTIMORE POLICE DEPARTMENT



Brandon M. Scott
Mayor

Michael S. Harrison
Police Commissioner

TO: The Honorable Members of the House Judiciary Committee
FROM: Michelle Wirzberger, Esq., Director of Government Affairs, Baltimore Police Dept.
RE: House Bill 672 Department of Juvenile Services – Juvenile Offense Database
DATE: February 11, 2021

POSITION: SUPPORT

Chair Clippinger, Vice-Chair Atterbeary, and members of the Committee, please be advised that the Baltimore Police Department **supports** House Bill 672.

House Bill 672 requires the Department of Juvenile Services, in coordination with the Administrative Office of the Courts, to develop a publicly accessible and searchable database that provides the following information regarding offenses involving juveniles:

- ✓ A description of the offense;
- ✓ The date the offense occurred;
- ✓ The location of the offense;
- ✓ A general description of any judicial or other action taken in relation to a juvenile alleged to have committed the offense such as if the juvenile was referred to a diversion or treatment program; and
- ✓ Any prior offenses committed by the juvenile.

We believe that this database would provide the public with necessary insight into crimes committed in their community. Moreover, it will allow the public to understand how juveniles are being treated by the criminal justice system; the types of sentences juveniles are receiving and whether or not prescribed interventions are having any effect on the behavior of the juvenile. This data will inform residents and leaders as to changes that may be needed to ensure that the system helps the juvenile to pivot away from a life of crime to a healthy, productive lifestyle.

The bill expressly forbids the release of any identifying information regarding the juvenile including his/her name; his/her age; the race of the juvenile; the juvenile's address or any known alias of the juvenile. This provision properly balances the public's need for information against the societal desire to protect the identify of the juvenile so as to not negatively impact their ability to seek employment, education or housing in the future.

Therefore, the Baltimore Police Department respectfully requests a **favorable** report on House Bill 672. Thank you for allowing us to comment on this important piece of legislation. If you should have any questions, feel free to reach me at michelle.wirzberger@baltimorepolice.org or via telephone at 443-915-3155.