



"Being here for Maryland's Children, Youth, and Families"

Testimony submitted to House Judiciary Committee

March 31, 2022

**Senate Bill 668 – Juveniles - Truancy Reduction Pilot Program – Expansion
Support as Amended**

The Maryland Association of Youth Service Bureaus, which represents a network of Bureaus throughout the State of Maryland, Supports SB 668 – Juveniles - Truancy Reduction Pilot Program – Expansion. Youth Service Bureaus are community-based programs that work with youth and their families to decrease the likelihood of youth involvement or re-involvement with the Department of Juvenile Services. This bill will expand Truancy Programs to include provisions for School Reengagement. We believe that this action is important as youth who are truant experience multiple obstacles in reengaging in school and need multiple opportunities to complete their education.

Under Maryland law, a truant student is one who is “unlawfully absent” from school for more than: 8 days in any quarter, 15 days in any semester, or 20 days in a school year. This Bill will allow the courts to order a truant child to attend school, including alternatives such as: summer school, a credit recovery program or a virtual learning program. The bill also allows a youth, with the permission of the local board of education to attend a GED program. Currently youth must attend school until age 18. If a youth under 18 is not succeeding in a regular school environment, providing the court with alternatives to assist this youth in completing their education is important.

We ask that you give this legislation a favorable finding.

Respectfully Submitted:

Liz Park, PhD
MAYSB Chair
lpark@greenbeltmd.gov