



THE PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY GOVERNMENT

(301) 952-3700 County Council

POSITION STATEMENT

SB 53

Juvenile Law - Juvenile Interrogation Protection Act

Sen. Carter

(JPR Committee)

POSITION:

SUPPORT W/AMENDMENT

SB 53 – Juvenile Law - Juvenile Interrogation Protection Act – This bill requires a law enforcement officer who takes a child into custody, interrogates or charges a child with a criminal violation to provide reasonable notice to the child's parents, guardian, or custodian; requiring the notice to include the child's location, the reason for the custody action, and instructions on how to make in-person contact; prohibiting the interrogation of a child by a law enforcement officer until the child has consulted with a certain attorney and a notice has been provided to the child's parents, guardian or custodian; etc.

The Prince George's County Council understands that the U.S. Supreme Court has recognized that police interrogation "can induce a frighteningly high percentage" of false confessions, and that this risk is multiplied when a child is the subject of an interrogation. Children are 2 to 3 times more likely to falsely confess than adults and account for approximately one-third of all false confessions. Research on adolescent development and neuroscience developments over the last half century have demonstrated unequivocally that teenagers are uniquely vulnerable to coercive interrogation tactics because teenagers prioritize short-term benefits over long-term consequences and are especially prone to comply with the requests of authority figures like police. This is why adolescents waive their Miranda rights almost 90% of the time and why juveniles falsely confess at rates that are at exponentially higher rates compared to adults. This bill gives the parent, the child, and the investigators clear directions to ensure the well-being of the child and the integrity of the investigation. The Council requests an amendment to clarify the process when the juvenile's parent or guardian is not available.

For the foregoing reasons, the Prince George's County Council **SUPPORTS SB 53 with the amendment offered** and respectfully requests your favorable consideration of its position.

Prepared by: Carrington & Associates, LLC
On behalf of the Prince George's County Council

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