



Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry of Maryland

Testimony in Support of SB 53: Juvenile Law - Juvenile Interrogation Protection Act

TO: Delegate Clippinger, Chair and Members of the Judiciary Committee

FROM: Karen "Candy" Clark,
Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry of Maryland Criminal Justice Lead

DATE: March 23, 2022

On behalf of the Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry of Maryland, we ask a favorable vote for SB 53: Juvenile Law-Juvenile Interrogation Protection Act as amended. This legislation should have been in place when officers first began to interrogate juveniles when charged. This is a traumatic experience for a minor and even for an adult. SB 53 incorporates processes that honor the inherent worth and dignity of the juvenile which is a principle we Unitarian Universalists uphold.

Requiring that the juvenile's parents/guardian are contacted as soon as possible so they can be present for the interrogation is critical. It helps calm the juvenile and reduce their trauma. Because other adults are there to support the minor, the interaction with the officer will be more respectful and all information between the parties will be clearly understood. All of these benefits will aid the juvenile to better understand the impact of their testimony.

If the practices listed in this law are followed, it should not only improve the interrogation process for both parties; but improve the relationship between our citizens and law enforcement— a goal for both our communities and police officers.

Please give SB 53 a FAVORABLE vote as amended.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Clark

UULM-MD Criminal Justice Lead