



TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION TO HB0319
Juvenile Justice Restoration Act of 2024

**** OPPOSE****

February 8, 2024

TO: Hon. Luke Clippinger, Chair, Hon. J. Sandy Bartlett, Vice Chair and the members of the House Judiciary Committee

FROM: Rev. Linda K. Boyd., Co-Chair, Maryland Episcopal Public Policy Network, Diocese of Maryland

DATE: February 8, 2024

The Episcopal Church at large and the Diocese of Maryland in particular have embraced the concept of reparations, a concept not limited to financial considerations but to a leveling of the playing field across a broad spectrum of issues, including juvenile justice. This Bill undermines several key provisions of the Juvenile Justice Restoration Act. A juvenile who is interrogated should have the right to consult with counsel. Research shows that juveniles who are incarcerated make them more likely to be arrested for new offenses. Because Black and brown children are more likely to be incarcerated, this Bill will exacerbate the serious racial disparities in Maryland's juvenile justice system. We believe that placing the burden on the juvenile without addressing the underlying causes of racial disparities cannot be tolerated.

Allowing juveniles to consult with counsel regarding custodial interrogation will be another small step in repairing (reparations) the damage done by a decades long policy of mass incarcerations.

The Diocese of Maryland requests a favorable report.