



Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services

Office of Government & Legislative Affairs

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BILL: HOUSE BILL 855

POSITION: LETTER OF INFORMATION

EXPLANATION: This bill provides that a minor may not be placed in restrictive housing solely for the purposes of discipline, punishment, administrative convenience, retaliation, or staffing shortages.

COMMENTS:

- The Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services' Division of Pretrial, Detention and Services (DPDS) oversees the Youth Detention Center (YDC). YDC is a pretrial facility for male and female juveniles under 18 years of age who have been charged in Baltimore City as adults.

- YDC does not have a restrictive housing unit. DPDS utilizes a Behavior Modification Housing Program as opposed to Restrictive Housing at YDC. Program participation does not involve the juvenile being removed from his/her cell.

- Using a multidisciplinary approach, weekly meetings are conducted with the parent/guardian, the juvenile, Baltimore City Public Schools, Psychology, the Facility Administrator, and Case Management to develop a behavior intervention plan that is used to redirect and encourage positive behavior with established benchmarks and reinforcers.

- The intervention plan emphasizes therapeutic services and includes Thinking for Change, restorative justice practices, as well as trauma informed wrap-around services.

- The behavior modification housing program is focused on providing meaningful support, services and interventions that promote positive growth and development.

CONCLUSION: For these reasons, the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services respectfully asks this Committee to consider this information as it deliberates on House Bill 855.

