

Testimony in favor with amendments of HB814

Juvenile Law Reform

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

From: Jerry Kickenson

Date: February 6, 2024

I am writing in **favor, with amendments, of House Bill 814**, Juvenile Law Reform.

The bill as proposed includes many useful elements, such as expanding jurisdiction to more gun related crimes, more notification of Juvenile Services, allowing longer probation periods where warranted, and more provisions related to the Commission on Juvenile Justice Reform and Emerging and 9 Best Practices.

However, the clauses to “get tougher” on non-serious crimes will not help stem real threats, and may instead harm children. Specifically:

- 3–8A–15.(b)(3)(iii) - “1. THE CHILD WAS UNDER THE SUPERVISION OF THE 4 DEPARTMENT OF JUVENILE SERVICES WHEN THE ALLEGED ACT OCCURRED; AND. 2. THE ALLEGED ACT, IF COMMITTED BY AN ADULT, 6 WOULD BE SUBJECT TO A PENALTY OF IMPRISONMENT OF MORE THAN 90 DAYS.

Children in trouble need more supervision and support, such as juvenile services and if necessary probation. They do not need more detention, which can harm the child and cause more not less criminal behavior later. Especially for non-serious offenses subject to penalties of only 91 days or more. Must we detain a child charged, for instance, with throwing an object at a vehicle, interfering with water utility equipment, or a second charge of trespass in order to maintain public safety?

I respectfully urge you to reach a **favorable** report, amended as described, for HB814.

Respectfully yours,

Jerry Kickenson

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