



## DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Marc Elrich  
*County Executive*

James C. Bridgers, Jr.,  
Ph.D., MBA  
*Acting Director*

**Tuesday, November 21, 2023**

**7:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.  
Meeting Virtually**

### **Agenda**

- 7:00 p.m. I. Welcome** – Kevin Redden, Chair
- 7:02 p.m. II. Attendance** – Please write your name down in the chat section or if you cannot do that, please let Diane know vocally that you are here. You can also send Diane an email. **Please mute your microphone unless you are speaking. Attendance sheet being passed around to those in person.**
- 7:05 p.m. III. Speakers** – **Senator Will Smith and Delegate Charlotte Crutchfield to discuss upcoming Juvenile Justice legislation for the State of MD. Questions below**

**1. Senate Briefings.** Sen. Smith: We understand you will be scheduling a couple of briefing sessions in early January focused on two areas of particular interest to this body—juvenile justice and chronic absenteeism. Could you tell us what questions you want the panelists to address and how these briefing sessions relate to the forthcoming work of JPR and your own legislative priorities for the 2024 session? Do you think there is role for the MGA to play in addressing chronic absenteeism?

**2. House Briefings.** Del. Crutchfield: There have been extensive briefings on juvenile justice in the House Judiciary Committee this fall. What do you think were some of the most important takeaways?

**3. Attacks on JJ Reforms.** Both of you supported the Juvenile Justice Reform Act and the Child Interrogation Protection Act, legislation that is now being attacked by law enforcement. There has been no shortage of stories in the press highlighting the complaints police have about this legislation. Do you expect that bills aiming at changing the minimum age or the access of children to attorneys prior to interrogation to have any traction in either house? Is there a reason why, with few exceptions, Democrats who voted for the passage of these bills do not appear to be speaking out now in defense of these important reforms?

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**4. Focus on Juvenile Crime.** Some of the opponents of reform, including Republican legislators, seem to be trying to make what we know or do not know about increases in crime by juveniles a central piece of the discussion about juvenile justice reform. In your opinion, what questions or issues do you think should be the focus of a debate about what changes are needed to provide for public safety and positive outcomes for young people?

**5. Ending Automatic Charging.** Sen. Smith: You have said that you could not agree to a bill to end automatic charging for all offenses without making changes in DJS such as extending the jurisdiction of DJS to age 25. What information or research has informed your thinking about the need to make this kind of change? Have you sought input from others like DJS, other legislators, advocates or directly impacted individuals about the feasibility or desirability of extending the age range?

**6. Capacity of DJS.** During the debate around juvenile justice reform, issues have been raised about DJS operations, including its capacity to provide the young people who come in contact with the system the services needed to prevent recidivism. What concerns do you have about the quality of DJS services or the capacity of DJS to meet the needs of the youth it serves? If you have concerns, what can you do as legislators and opinion leaders to address this issue?

**7. Ending Felony Murder.** We have previously talked to you both about the felony murder doctrine and I believe you both agree that its application is problematic. During the last session Del. Crutchfield sponsored a bill to eliminate its application to young people, a bill which the Commission supported. If the bill is reintroduced in 2024, what do you see as the barriers to MGA action on this proposal?

**8. Ending Gun Violence.** The MGA has passed a number of important gun control measures. What more can be done by the MGA to get guns off the streets and out of the hands of young people? What policies, programs, or actions do you think are most promising in addressing gun violence, especially among young people?

**9. Maryland Equitable Justice Collaborative.** On October 25 the Attorney General and the Maryland Public Defender announced the formation of the Maryland Equitable Justice Collaborative to examine existing laws, policies, and practices affecting the

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criminal justice system and to produce a comprehensive plan for reform by January 2025. One of the Collaborative's Committees will focus on Juvenile Justice.

a. How do you see this project affecting action in the MGA in 2024? For example, do you expect votes to be delayed on some bills pending receipt of this group's final recommendations in January 2025? How do you see this project affecting decisions on whether to sponsor bills relating to criminal justice reform in 2024?

b. On what kinds of issues do you see the most potential for this group of organizations and offices with widely divergent perspectives to offer helpful recommendations? What are some examples of laws, policies, or practices relating to youth that you would like the Collaborative to examine?

c. Do you expect members of the General Assembly to have any role in the Collaborative's process to develop recommendations?

**9. Prevention Services.** This Commission is working on a proposal that is aimed at providing better access to a wide range of services for young people who are at risk of justice involvement and thereby preventing such involvement. In your opinion, what kinds of services to be provided in the County do you think have the most potential for supporting families and helping young people avoid the school to prison pipeline or justice involvement more generally and be successful in school and thereafter?

**10. Continuing the Juvenile Justice Reform Council.** The Juvenile Justice Reform Council (JJRC) did a great job of reviewing and analyzing juvenile justice research and reaching consensus on recommended reforms. What are your thoughts on using this body again to review implementation of the Juvenile Justice Reform Act (JJRA) and recommend any additional reforms or suggestions for implementation?

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**8:00 p.m. IV. Meeting Minutes – Vote on draft October 2023 minutes**

**8:05 p.m. V. New Business**

- A. Annual Report
- B. Children's Center Ad-hoc Committee – Carlotta Woodward and Jordan Satinsky
- C. Legislative Committee – Carol Cichowski and Bonnie Beavers
- D. Nomination committee- Diane

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- 8:15 p.m. IV. Upcoming Meetings**
- A. **December** – Commission does not meet.
  - B. **January 16, 2024** – Next Commission meeting. What would members like to do?
  - C. **February 20, 2024** – Legislative meeting. This meeting may last until 9pm as we will have numerous pieces of legislation to discuss.
  - D. **Announcements from Members – Commission members have any announcements about events or activities?**
- 8:30 p.m. VII. Meeting Adjourned**

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8818 Georgia Avenue, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor, Suite 501 • Silver Spring, Maryland 20910 • 240-777-1450 • 240-777-1367 FAX  
7300 Calhoun Place, Suite 600 • Rockville, Maryland 20850 • 240-777-1432 • 240-777-4447 FAX  
[www.montgomerycountymd.gov](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov)