



OFFICES OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

Douglas M. Duncan
County Executive

Bruce Romer
Chief Administrative Officer

February 28, 2005

Senator Brian E. Frosh, Chair
Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee
Miller Senate Office Building, 2 East Wing
11 Bladen St.
Annapolis, Maryland 21401-1991

Dear Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

I am writing this letter to urge your support of Senate Bills 616, Juvenile Competency and Senate Bill 784, Juvenile Competency Services. This legislation is needed to strengthen Maryland's protection for vulnerable youths in the State's juvenile justice system. As you know, current Maryland law is vague and not effective on the issue of juvenile competency. There is no definition of incompetency or a standard evaluation process for determining competency. The result is that competency is not considered if at all until the juvenile trial.

In addition, there is no requirement in current Maryland law that the appropriate assessment services from a qualified expert be provided to juveniles who may be in need of these services because they are not competent to stand trial because of their mental or emotional condition. These clearly are serious shortcomings in our juvenile justice system that is severely disadvantaging some of our most vulnerable, at-risk youths.

If you are in need of further information or clarification concerning this issue please do not hesitate to contact me at 301.519.5510 or at dkbusiness7@yahoo.com. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Dolores Kozloski, Chair
Montgomery County Criminal Justice Coordinating Commission

DK:jfb



Criminal Justice Coordinating Commission

101 Monroe Street • Rockville, Maryland 20850 • 240/777-2500, TTY 240/777-2544, FAX 240/777-2518
www.montgomerycountymd.gov





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Joseph F. Vallario, Jr., Chairman
House Judiciary Committee
Lowe House Office Building, Room 121
84 College Avenue
Annapolis, MD 21401 – 1991

Dear Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

I am writing this letter to urge your support of House Bills 802, Juvenile Competency and House Bill 1007, Juvenile Competency Services. This legislation is needed to strengthen Maryland's protection for vulnerable youths in the State's juvenile justice system. As you know, current Maryland law is vague and not effective on the issue of juvenile competency. There is no definition of incompetency or a standard evaluation process for determining competency. The result is that competency is not considered if at all until the juvenile trial.

In addition, there is no requirement in current Maryland law that the appropriate assessment services from a qualified expert be provided to juveniles who may be in need of these services because they are not competent to stand trial because of their mental or emotional condition. These clearly are serious shortcomings in our juvenile justice system that is severely disadvantaging some of our most vulnerable, at-risk youths.

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