



Maryland Alliance for Justice Reform

Dear Delegate

Support SB0286 - Behavioral Health Crisis Response

Police may be called to public places or homes to handle crisis situations created by individuals with drug or alcohol problems, abusive behavior, or mental illness. Currently, these situations often lead to criminal charges instead of addressing the underlying causes with treatment.

The focus of this act is to establish what are called 'Mobile Crisis Teams' and to minimize law enforcement interaction for individuals in crisis.

In Maryland, some jurisdictions currently have crisis intervention teams trained to respond to these situations. This bill would expand an existing grant program for localities so they could institute or improve their programs, with an emphasis on services that are both mobile and available 24/7.

Training these teams, providing extra personal, and funding social service programs can have a substantial cost, but have proven to be cost effective in the long run because of the improved functionality of individuals in their families and communities, and the reduced costs to the state related to crime and incarceration.

See: <https://www.ma4jr.org/crisis-response-and-intervention/>

This is important legislation that addresses police involvement directly. Please support SB286!

Sincerely,