

MUSTER: Urge Members of the House Judiciary Committee to Vote for HB0921 – Juvenile Law – Confinement & Restrictive Housing – Limitations

Dear MAJR Supporter:

On Thursday, February 26, 2026, the House Judiciary Committee will hold a hearing on HB0921. You have been selected to take action because your Delegate serves on this Committee. Please urge your Delegate to vote favorably on this important bill.

Young people in custody are uniquely vulnerable. Research and lived experience consistently show that isolating youth in restrictive housing can cause serious psychological harm and undermine rehabilitation. Adolescents' brains are still developing, particularly in areas responsible for impulse control, emotional regulation, and decision-making. Prolonged isolation can increase depression, anxiety, trauma symptoms, and risk of self-harm.

HB0921 establishes clear and humane limits on the use of restrictive housing for incarcerated minors. Importantly, the bill does not eliminate tools necessary to maintain safety within facilities. Instead, it promotes developmentally appropriate responses, behavioral supports, and structured programming that research shows are more effective at maintaining order and preparing youth for successful reentry.

States across the country are recognizing that children in custody require age-appropriate standards of care. Policies that reduce trauma and emphasize accountability and rehabilitation are more likely to lower recidivism and enhance long-term public safety.

For these reasons, the Maryland Alliance for Justice Reform (MAJR) urges you to contact your Delegate and ask them to vote in favor of HB0921.

To: Members of the House Judiciary Committee

Subject: Support HB0921 – Juvenile Law – Confinement & Restrictive Housing – Limitations

As your constituent, I write to ask you to vote in favor of HB0921, which is scheduled for a hearing on February 26, 2026.

This bill places reasonable, evidence-based limits on the use of restrictive housing for incarcerated youth. Research from leading medical and child development organizations has made clear that solitary confinement and prolonged isolation pose serious risks to adolescents' mental health. Youth subjected to isolation report significantly higher rates of depression, anxiety, psychological distress, and self-harm.

Because young people's brains are still developing, they are especially vulnerable to these harms.

Importantly, HB0921 does not compromise institutional safety. Rather, it supports developmentally appropriate interventions and behavioral management strategies that are more effective in maintaining order while promoting rehabilitation. Evidence shows that structured programming and supportive approaches reduce misconduct and improve long-term outcomes.

Children in state custody deserve standards of care that reflect their age and developmental needs. By limiting harmful practices while preserving necessary safety measures, HB0921 represents a balanced and responsible reform.

As your constituent and as a supporter of the Maryland Alliance for Justice Reform (MAJR), I respectfully urge you to vote favorably on HB0921.