

Urgent!
Please call SB422 for a vote in JPR!

**Let's narrow adult charges for juveniles to the
most serious crimes**

How do we treat our children who are accused of a crime? Current law permits prosecutors to automatically charge too many children as adults for more than 30 offenses, even though reliable scientific studies show there is a better way. SB 422 reasonably would reduce those chargeable directly in adult court to a smaller number (murder, serious sex offenses, carjacking and violent gun-crimes) and to older teenagers (ages 16 and 17).

Many problems result from Maryland's charging of juveniles in adult-court:

1. Most so charged and held in adult detention centers become dropouts and have increased crime rates.
2. Yet Maryland studies show 87% of those top charges end up being dismissed!
3. Especially harmful is the disparate racial treatment as 80% of youth charged as adults in Maryland are African-Americans.
4. Because adult courts move more slowly than juvenile courts, youth in adult detention facilities spend much more time in these harmful environments – at greater taxpayer expense!

The U.S. Supreme Court recognizes that different standards must apply to juveniles in comparison to adults. Other states have modernized their laws accordingly. But, in Maryland, more juveniles end up in Maryland prisons than any other U.S. state, except for Alabama.

In addition to the increasing likelihood of subsequent violent crimes, incarceration of juveniles in adult prisons costs more than \$40,000 per person per year. By contrast, treatment in the juvenile system focuses on rehabilitation to reduce the risk of recidivism and, thus, improve community safety.

For more information, please visit <https://www.ma4jr.org/expungement/>

What can you do to help? Maryland General Assembly committee leaders sometimes fail to call important bills like SB422 for a vote – or may give them this chance only when it is too late to pass both houses. Please use the link below to contact Senate JPR chair Will Smith and Senate President Bill Ferguson asking them, please, to call SB422 for a vote as soon as possible!

[**Click Here to Take Action**](#)

Thank you for your advocacy,

Maryland Alliance for Justice Reform