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TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 11/ SB 452

Juveniles Charged as Adults - Confidentiality of Photos and Videos

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Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on House Bill 11 Juveniles Charged as Adults - Confidentiality of Photos and Videos. Advocates for Children and Youth (ACY), CLIA, NAACP supports this bill.

HB 11 would prevent the release of case details for youth charged as adults to the media and on CaseSearch until a judge has heard the case in a transfer hearing. Current practices breach the juvenile's right to privacy, undermine attempts at rehabilitation, and could deny reintegration back into the community. The rise of social media and the global spread of information shares youth offenders' identity named publicly across multiple news outlets that can be accessed by national and international audiences for life. Minors caught up in the criminal justice system should not suffer lifelong repercussions for youthful indiscretions.

Removing access to privacy imposes a secondary punishment of a youth beyond criminal charges and may have long term negative impacts which include: increased stigmatization and hinder future employment and housing opportunities. Further, undue publicity leads to implicit biases causing Judges to assign greater culpability, prejudice towards guilt and adultification of the young person removing the ability to be seen as a youth offender.

Shielding a young person's case until a judge has heard it would have two positive benefits:

1. Ensures the youth charged in "high-profile" cases receive the same right to a fair hearing as youth who are charged in lower-profile cases.
2. It preserves the positive benefits of a transfer hearing.

The juvenile's right to privacy must be protected at all stages in order to avoid harm being caused by undue publicity and labelling.

We urge this committee to issue a favorable report on HB 11