



Expand the Jurisdiction of the Independent Juvenile Ombudsman
HB 5273 (Gonzalez Jr.)/SB3648 (Villa)

The Independent Juvenile Ombudsman's role is to ensure that the rights of youth committed to the Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice are fully observed, and to assist in pursuing services for committed youth and their families determined to be in need of assistance.

- HB5273/SB3648 would ***expand the oversight provided by the Independent Office of Ombudsman to include County-run Juvenile detention facilities.***
- Expansion of this oversight is critically needed; youth are a vulnerable population who have *less* access to safeguards when they are removed from their homes and in the custody of the state or county.
- As policy changes have led to more youth being committed to county detention centers than to the Department of Juvenile Justice, the oversight provided to youth in state custody should extend to the county detention centers where youth are held.
- Currently there is no office of Ombudsman for juveniles in county facilities. Limited oversight of county detention centers is provided through the Illinois Department of Corrections but is not engaged with or available to youth in custody, their families, or legal guardians
- Very little information is available about how youth are treated in County facilities and the challenges they face. What is known is that they do not have access to an independent office to request assistance, obtain information, communicate confidentially, or seek relief.
- The Ombudsman has proven to be an important partner in the protection of Illinois' youth.
- Stakeholders support expanding the jurisdiction of the Ombuds office to serve youth in county detention facilities.

Support HB 5273 (Gonzalez Jr.)/SB3648 (Villa)

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