

A Multi Year Approach Raise the Age of Juvenile Court for Misdemeanors

Sponsor: Sen. Fine-Peters, Castro

SB 239

What this Bill Does Begins cases of older teens charged with misdemeanor offenses in juvenile, rather than adult court.

- As of Jan 1, 2020, “delinquent minor” includes 18 year olds charged with misdemeanors.
- As of Jan 1, 2022, “delinquent minor” includes 19 & 20 year olds charged with misdemeanors.

This **gradual approach** gives the state time to study the population as they are integrated into the juvenile system for better long-term outcomes. Further, the bill encourages the IL Juvenile Justice Commission to make recommendations regarding services for this emerging adult population.

These cases are still eligible for transfer to adult court if the prosecutor believes the misdemeanor should be transferred.

WHY THIS BILL IS NECESSARY – Once a teenager turns 18, (s)he is not eligible for the extensive and effective diversion options that benefit younger teens.

PROFOUND RACIAL DISPARITIES- African American Emerging Adults are 9.4 times more likely to be incarcerated in Illinois than their white peers. Illinois has an incarceration rate for emerging adults 3.5 times higher than New York and 2.4 times higher than California.

THIS BILL EXPANDS POLICE DISCRETION by allowing police to utilize juvenile diversions including “station house adjustments”. Emerging adults will have access to juvenile diversion programs and practices. Criminal repeat offending decreases with effective diversion and treatment, so the public will benefit from lower repeat offending and from lower costs from fewer jail admissions.

National Movement Vermont Act No 201 moves all non-serious violent felony teenager cases to Family Court. The act calls for automatic expungement of criminal records of people who committed certain crimes between 18-21 and appropriates funding to DCF for expansion of services for 18 and 19-year olds.

Massachusetts Chapter 69 of the Acts of 2018 created a Juvenile Justice and Policy Data Board composed of the three branches of government, advocates, providers, and parents of youth in the justice system who are charged with looking at raising the age of juvenile court jurisdiction to 21, improving data collection and reporting, and assessing the impact of childhood trauma on juvenile justice involvement.

SUPPORTERS INCLUDE:

- Parent Teacher Association of Illinois –
- United Congress of Community and Religious Organizations (UCCRO)
- YMCA of Metropolitan Chicago
- Chicago Urban League
- Community Behavioral Healthcare Association of IL
- Community Renewal Society
- Illinois Collaboration on Youth
- Business and Professional People for the Public Interest
- ACLU of Illinois
- League of Women Voters
- Juvenile Justice Initiative

Juvenile Justice Initiative

518 Davis, Suite 211
Evanston, IL 60201

Telephone: 847/864-1567

www.jjustice.org Email – gg@jjustice.org


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