



Aisha Braveboy
State's Attorney

PRESS RELEASE

December 14, 2023 For Immediate Release

STATE'S ATTORNEY BRAVEBOY AND STATE'S ATTORNEY BATES UNVEIL JOINT LEGISLATIVE PACKAGE FOR 2024 SESSION

Upper Marlboro - Today, Prince George's County State's Attorney Aisha Braveboy and Baltimore City State's Attorney Ivan J. Bates announced their support of several upcoming bills in the 2024 legislative session, including efforts to tackle juvenile crime in their respective jurisdictions.

"Together, I truly believe that we will make a difference in our respective jurisdictions and in the state," said State's Attorney Braveboy. "The fact is that we have similar jurisdictions in terms of demographics, and we are facing many of the same challenges, such as crime. As a result, we have decided to unite on our top legislative priorities, such as expanding the gang statute, changing the limitations of the child interrogation and juvenile probation laws, and creating a felony domestic abuser database. Changing the laws attached to these issues will give us the tools we need to more effectively prosecute cases and make our communities safer. While we are committed to holding offenders accountable, we also believe that our justice system must be balanced, compassionate, and restorative. That is why we are fighting for a bill that provides prosecutors with the ability to request reconsideration of a sentence beyond the current 5-year cap. And lastly, we will ask the legislature to make it easier for families to access funds to bury their loved ones who are victims of homicide in a timely manner, removing a major stressor during that critical time."

"I am excited to partner with my talented colleague, State's Attorney Aisha Braveboy, to announce our collaborative support of several bills in Annapolis this legislative session that will target the increase in juvenile offenses that we have both seen in the jurisdictions we represent," said State's Attorney Bates. "Curbing the rise of juvenile crime across Baltimore and this state is a top priority for my office and is in the legislative package that State's Attorney Braveboy and I will advocate for in Annapolis next year. The proposed changes are about equity in our juvenile justice system and are reasonable and effective measures to improve public safety, especially concerning our youthful offenders. While we are pushing for stronger accountability for young people, we are also advocating for restorative measures for incarcerated individuals and changes to reduce the impact on families already dealing with grief from a traumatic event. This is a holistic effort to address communities in need in our respective districts."

State's Attorneys Braveboy and Bates will be mutually supporting the following legislation in Annapolis this year:

Juvenile Dispositions – Increasing the probationary period of a misdemeanor involving a juvenile illegally wearing, carrying, and/or transporting a firearm OR knowing and willfully taking a motor vehicle without the owner's lawful custody, control, or consent from six months to two years while also increasing the probationary period of those found guilty of violent felonies from two years to four years maximum. The prosecutor's office shall be afforded the opportunity to review and/or prosecute any cases involving illegal firearms or auto theft, with the right to seek an adult waiver hearing for any juvenile 15 years and nine months or older.

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Juvenile Competency – Ensuring that any juvenile found to be not criminally responsible and/or found non-competent shall be detained on their second or subsequent offense, and a youth pending Competency who commits additional offenses should not be afforded the statutory requirement of dismissal of the original charges that brought the youth before the Court – time should toll on the original case and restart after the new case.

GPS Home Monitoring/House Arrest – In conjunction with Mayor Brandon Scott's legislation around electronic home monitoring, any juvenile found to have violated or breached the contract or perimeter of their home monitoring agreement, the Department of Juvenile Services shall have 24-hours to notify the courts, the prosecutor's office and defense counsel of said breach.

Parent Responsibility Act – Mandating the Department of Juvenile Services institute a CINS petition when a juvenile violates home monitoring and a parent or legal guardian fails to inform the courts about their child's violation, and possibly add truancy violations to this legislative act to ensure parents are held responsible for their child's actions.

Motion to Modify – For adult cases, eliminating the five-year cap on motions to modify to allow for the one-time modification to be filed anytime during a person's sentence.

"I speak for not only my community but for those across our city and state who would all agree that the changes made to the laws were well-intentioned but naïve. And the consequences of those changes have resulted in contributing to a shockingly dramatic increase in juvenile crime, especially violent crimes of opportunity," said Arch McKown, Safety Chairperson, Patterson Park Neighborhood Association. "I look forward to working with my State's Attorney, Ivan Bates, as well as State's Attorney Braveboy and the members of the Maryland General Assembly to take an intentional and thoughtful approach to amending the juvenile laws to provide more transparency and accountability around juvenile justice in Maryland."

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