



Anthony G. Brown
Lt. Governor

Martin O'Malley
Governor

Donald W. DeVore
Secretary

November 5, 2009

Congressman John Conyers, Jr.
Chairman
U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on the Judiciary
2138 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Congressman Lamar S. Smith
Ranking Member
U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on the Judiciary
2142 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Conyers and Ranking Member Smith:

I am writing to express my support for the passage of H.R. 1064, entitled "Youth PROMISE Act." Addressing issues that have a direct impact on public safety has a very real and tangible result – lives are saved. Through the development and implementation of evidence-based and promising practices as they relate to juvenile gang activity and juvenile delinquency prevention programs, we are not only dealing with these issues today but heading-off issues which we will surely be confronting tomorrow.

As you are aware, every state in the nation, and Maryland is no exception, feels the impact every day of youth who are looking for a guiding force in their life. Many have found guidance already in family members, some find it through school or other activities but there are some who find it in gangs. In filling that void, gangs are also encouraging a lifestyle that all too often ends in tragedy.

H.R. 1064 provides opportunities for prevention and intervention that will help build strength and resiliency in individuals, families, and communities to ensure that children, especially those at the highest risk of involvement in gangs and delinquent behavior, are given opportunities to be safe, healthy, and gang-free.

Programs such as those provided for in H.R. 1064 provide an invaluable service and resource to the communities and neighborhoods in our State, but most importantly, to our children. Your favorable consideration of this legislation is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Donald W. DeVore
Secretary, Maryland Department of Juvenile Services

cc: Maryland Congressional Delegation
Congressman Bobby Scott, Chairman, House Committee on the Judiciary, Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, and Homeland Security

