

Action Alert!

Time-sensitive facts regarding legislation affecting Michigan's children and families.

for Child and Family Advocates



December 6, 2018

Time Is Running Out: Urge Michigan's Legislature to Raise The Age

Michigan is ONE of four states that automatically tries 17-year-old offenders as adults. The juvenile correctional system offers more opportunities for youth who offend to receive necessary rehabilitative services that are proven to reduce recidivism and violent crimes in later years through supportive, community-based services.

The Michigan House Law and Justice Committee has passed a package of bills (HB 4607, 4653, 4659, 4662, 4664, 4675, 4685) that would raise the age of juvenile court jurisdiction to allow prosecutors the choice of enrolling 17-year-olds into juvenile justice programs. There is still time to get these bills passed into law. Before the end of this year, in order to get the Governor's signature the bills have to:

1. Be discussed and passed by the full State House. The House is led by the Speaker of the House, Tom Leonard. Without the support of House leadership and enough backing from other House members, <http://house.michigan.gov/leadership.asp>, the bills will not move to the Senate.
2. Be approved by the Senate Judiciary Committee <http://www.senate.michigan.gov/committee/judiciary.html>. This committee is chaired by Sen. Rick Jones, who supports the idea of raising the age but needs the support of citizens to advance these bills as a priority with his colleagues during "lame duck".
3. Be discussed and passed by the full Senate. The Senate is led by the Majority Leader, Sen. Arlan Meekhof. Without the support of Senate leadership and members of the Senate, <http://www.senate.michigan.gov/leadership.htm>, they could fall short of the Governor's desk.

This can be done! These bills have a real chance of passing if they get through the remaining barriers. There is support for these bills, but the Legislature needs to know that this issue is your priority.

Join Michigan's Children now to give our Legislature the opportunity to finish this critical legislation. The regulations in the package of bills are a great step in protecting our kids, allowing them a bright future and doing our best by all of the youth and families who come in contact with the justice system.

1. Call Speaker Tom Leonard (517) 373-1778; TomLeonard@house.mi.gov, and your State Representative and ask them for a vote on Raise the Age
2. Call Senator Jones (517) 373-3447; SenRJones@senate.michigan.gov, or your state Senator who is on the Senate Judiciary Committee (link on first page), and ask them for a hearing and a vote.
3. If they are not on the Senate Judiciary Committee, call your State Senator and Senator Meekhof and tell them you want a vote on Raise the Age as soon as possible once it hits the Senate floor.

Your voice matters. Use it!

If you have any questions, contact Michele Corey at michele@michiganschildren.org or Bobby Dorigo Jones robert@michiganschildren.org. Let's help our Legislators get the job done to Raise the Age!