

Item Title: Resolution Supporting Raising the Age of Juvenile Jurisdiction for Certain Crimes and Supporting the Passage of House Bill 280

Specific Action Requested:

That the Board of Commissioners approves a resolution in support of raising the age of juvenile jurisdiction from 16 to 18 in North Carolina for all crimes other than Class A through E felonies and traffic offenses and supports the passage of House Bill 280.

Item Summary:

On March 8, 2017, a bipartisan group of North Carolina House of Representative members filed House Bill 280 entitled “Juvenile Justice Reinvestment Act.” The act would raise the age of juvenile jurisdiction to include 16- and 17-year-olds except in the case of certain felony offenses and motor vehicle infractions. North Carolina remains one of only two states in the country that automatically prosecutes 16- and 17-year-olds as adults regardless of the severity of the crime.

Ninety-seven of crimes committed by 16- and 17-year-olds in North Carolina are categorized as either misdemeanors (80%) or non-violent felonies (17%).

It is anticipated that raising the age of juvenile jurisdiction will lead to significant long-term benefits including:

- More effective rehabilitation of youth offenders within the juvenile justice system
- Long-term financial savings
- Safer communities
- Improved academic results
- Better overall outcomes for youth – improved job prospects, eligibility for college financial aid and ability to enlist in the military

The Raise the Age bill is supported by the following groups (partial list):

- NC Commission on the Administration of Law and Justice
- NC Sheriffs’ Association
- NC Police Benevolent Association
- NC Association of Chiefs of Police
- NC Association of County Commissioners
- NC Chamber of Commerce Legal Institute
- Conservatives for Criminal Justice Reform
- NC Child
- Disability Rights NC
- ACLU-NC
- John Locke Foundation

Attachments:

1. Resolution