



BECAUSE THE CONSEQUENCES AREN'T MINOR

For immediate release  
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## **DOC Oversight Hearing: Testimony on Impact of Placing Youth at DC Jail** *Advocates Call for Immediate Reform*

(Washington D.C.) – On October 29<sup>th</sup> at 11:00 am, the DC City Council will hold a Department of Corrections oversight hearing at the DC Council Chambers (1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW). At the hearing, youth, advocates and experts will testify on the impact of placing youth at the DC Jail and call on officials to remove youth from DOC custody. Witnesses include Dr. Jennifer Woolard of Georgetown University; Michelle Tupper, attorney and board member of DC Lawyers for Youth; and Wil, a youth formerly incarcerated at the DC Jail.

The hearing follows the release of the report, *A Capital Offense: Youth in DC's Adult Criminal Justice System and Strategies for Reform*, examining the status of children in the District of Columbia's adult criminal justice system. The report's findings show that youth in D.C. jail can spend up to 23 and a half hours a day locked up in their cells. Initial data as well as accounts from youth indicate that the experience of being confined in close contact with adults can have severe consequence on a young person's development. Youth detained in the D.C. jail do not benefit from the extensive reform measures currently under implementation at the Department of Youth Rehabilitative Services. The report also sheds light on the lack of appropriate educational and rehabilitative programs and services available to youth in adult facilities.

The report makes the following recommendations, which have been endorsed by local advocates in a letter to the Mayor and D.C. City Council:

- End the pretrial placement of youth in the adult jail;
- Require that all transfer cases be decided by a judge;
- Provide a "reverse" waiver mechanism for youth in adult court to be returned to juvenile jurisdiction when appropriate;



*The Campaign for Youth Justice (C4YJ) is a national organization dedicated to ending the practice of trying, sentencing and incarcerating youth under the age of 18 in the adult criminal justice system. For more information, visit: [www.campaign4youthjustice.org](http://www.campaign4youthjustice.org).*