

February 11, 2025

House Judiciary Testimony

Office of the Child, Youth, and Family Advocate

### Guiding Questions for Raise the Age

- Will the legislation you are considering actually make our communities safer, welcoming, and economically vibrant?
- Have you taken into account the disproportionate impact of the policies you are considering on non-white Vermonters, Vermonters with disabilities, and children in foster care?
  - Relatedly, have you heard in this committee from the communities and people who are most impacted by this proposed legislation?
- How will we know if the changes you make to Raise the Age are successful? What metrics will you use?
- Will this legislation ease the court backlog, the prosecutorial and defender capacity issues, and DCF caseloads and capacity issues?
- Will this legislation make it more likely or less likely that a young person who touches the juvenile justice system falls further into the criminal system? Will it enable young people to leave the criminal justice system behind and become successful?
- Will this legislation encourage young Vermonters to stay here and become successful adults?
- Will this legislation deter the movement of large quantities of drugs through our state?
- Does this bill reduce the complexity of the current system?
  - Do you fully understand the system as it currently functions, and the one that will be created if you pass this legislation?