

JOINT COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY
BILL SUMMARY

BILL NO. H1979

TITLE: An Act prohibiting deception in juvenile interrogations

SPONSOR: Rep. Lindsay N. Sabadosa

COSPONSOR(S): Rep. Sal N. DiDomenico

HEARING DATE: June 10, 2025

PRIOR HISTORY: H1756 (2023-2024)

SENATE BILL: S1065 (DiDomenico)

CURRENT LAW: Chapter 119 of the General Laws establishes protections for children in the Commonwealth and the procedures for their treatment by law enforcement. Section 74 of Chapter 119 places a bar subject to exception on prosecuting children under the age of 18.

Section 1 of Chapter 263 requires an officer inform a person of the true ground of their arrest and any officer who refuses to do so or makes false statements is punished by up to 1 year of incarceration or a fine of not more than \$1,000.

BILL SUMMARY: Section 1 – Adds 2 new sections to the end of Chapter 119. The first, Section 90, adds a presumption that any statements by juveniles in custody when a law enforcement officer engages in knowing deception were involuntary. To overcome that presumption the Commonwealth must show beyond a reasonable doubt that a statement was voluntary and not due to any deception. The second, Section 91, would mandate that all statements made by a juvenile be recorded. Failure to secure a recording would make the statement inadmissible unless the Commonwealth can show by clear and convincing evidence that creating and saving a recording was not reasonably possible.