

In Support of the STEP ACT.

For the better part of the past 30 years in education, 20 at Montgomery College, I have had the privilege of working with a number of Black males. As relationships developed, they have entrusted me with both their hopes and fears. The fears vary from not getting into the college they prefer, to disappointing their parents or peers to not making the NBA. It is relatively easy to process such fears. But the most common fears by far are encounters with police and those fear are not easily to processed.

The other fears are temporal setbacks from which I could always assure them that they would recover. Given that police encounters could literally be life and death, such assurance could not be given.

This is why I urge you to pass the STEP ACT with the hope that it can mitigate the very encounters which all too many Black males fear most. While I am under no illusion that this will be the radical change in policing I believe is necessary, I do believe it is a "Step" in the right direction.

When a specific demographic of the public has a justifiable fear of an arm of the all powerful state, something is wrong. Passing the STEP ACT can contribute to mitigating what is wrong.

Respectfully,

Professor Gus Griffin, Counselor/Mentor

Boys to Men

Montgomery College.