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THE DISPROPORTIONATE MINORITY CONTACT REDUCTION INITIATIVE RECEIVES AN ACHIEVEMENT AWARD FROM THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES

Towson, MD (July 18, 2008) - Donald DeVore, Secretary for Department of Juvenile Services joined Baltimore County Executive Jim Smith today in honoring the staff and stakeholders of the Baltimore County Disproportionate Minority Contact (DMC) Reduction Initiative, which received an Achievement Award from the National Association of Counties (NACo), today.

The Baltimore County DMC Reduction Initiative, which began in 2003, was created to reduce the overrepresentation of minority youth in Baltimore County's juvenile justice system, particularly in secure detention. The Initiative, which has been successful in reducing the African American population in secure detention in Baltimore County, has yielded positive results from its Writ Policy Intervention and Respondent Notification Plan.

The Initiative was distinguished from other DMC efforts because its approach and focus on the writs. By establishing the Writ Intervention Plan, it was able to effectively ensure that youth who were detained posed a public safety and flight risk.

The Respondent Notification Plan was implemented in an attempt to reduce the number of failure to appear (FTA) findings and subsequent FTA-related detention admissions. The Notification program provides a personal telephone call made to all minor youth and families with upcoming court dates, in order to ensure awareness of court hearings.

"The Department of the Juvenile Services (DJS) is committed to reducing the number disproportionate minorities in the juvenile justice system and is encouraged by the work being done in Baltimore County. Accordingly, DJS has hired a full-time DMC Coordinator to support the local efforts but more importantly, push for progress throughout the State. Baltimore County is a wonderful model and a program we would like to see replicated," stated Secretary DeVore.