Lansing Church of the Brethren

"Continuing the work of Jesus peacefully, simply and together"

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STATEMENT OF SUPPORT FOR "RAISE THE AGE" LEGISLATION

We, the undersigned, are:

- ❖ Residents of the State of Michigan
- ❖ People of faith who believe in the dignity and sanctity of each human being
- ❖ Voters and young participants;
- ❖ Members of the study and action group "Plant Justice, Grow Peace"
- ❖ Citizens who find it essential to increase the maximum age of juvenile court jurisdiction from 17 to 18 years old.

Michigan is one of only four remaining states in the United States where 17-year-olds are automatically considered adults for criminal offenses. To align with standard national practices, Michigan should raise the age of juvenile court jurisdiction to 18.**

Youth placed in adult jails and prisons are more likely to experience physical and sexual violence, isolation and self-harm. Compared to prison, Michigan's public and private juvenile facilities – many of which already serve youth with adult convictions – can provide age/developmentally appropriate treatment that is more effective in rehabilitating youth.**

Juvenile courts offer highly effective diversion and community-based programs not accessible in adult court. Because the majority of 17-year-old offenders have non-violent charges, they are more likely to respond well to community-based options that are designed to keep kids in school, address underlying treatment needs and engage the whole family.**

We encourage you to do the right thing and vote in favor of these bills.

**Taken from Human Impact Partners. June 2017. Reducing youth Arrests Keeps Kids Healthy and Successful: A Health Analysis of Youth Arrest in Michigan. Human Impact Partners, Oakland, CA.   Funded by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation.

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