

**Department of Legislative Services**  
Maryland General Assembly  
2016 Session

**FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE**  
**First Reader**

House Bill 498  
Judiciary

(Delegate B. Robinson)

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**Correctional Services - Senior Reentry Coordinating Council**

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This bill establishes a Senior Reentry Coordinating Council in the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services (DPSCS). The bill establishes provisions relating to membership, terms, and the designation of a chair. A council member may not receive compensation, but is entitled to reimbursement for expenses. DPSCS must provide staff for the council.

The council must (1) identify services needed by seniors who are being released from prison; (2) determine how those services can best be provided by governmental and other entities; (3) identify programs to support families of incarcerated individuals; (4) develop reentry policies that incorporate support for both returning individuals and their families; and (5) advise DPSCS in accordance with its work.

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**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** Any expense reimbursements for council members and staffing costs for DPSCS are assumed to be minimal and absorbable within existing budgeted resources.

**Local Effect:** None.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

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**Analysis**

**Current Law/Background:** Chapters 625 and 626 of 2009 established the Task Force on Prisoner Reentry to research, analyze, and examine prisoner recidivism in the State and develop a comprehensive strategic reentry plan as specified by the federal Second Chance

Act of 2007. The final report to the General Assembly recommended a restructuring of the State's correctional system to reduce prison expenditures and the creation of a Reentry Initiative, which would create individualized reentry plans, education, and work programs for individuals in custody and under community supervision.

The average daily population for inmates in DPSCS facilities in fiscal 2015 was 20,600. During the same time period, 9,965 offenders were released back into the community through parole, mandatory supervision, expiration of sentence, and court order. Of those released in 2015, 340 were age 60 or older. Statistics show that, for those offenders released in fiscal 2013, more than 40% returned with a new conviction (prison sentence or parole/probation) within three years of their release from prison. Some local jurisdictions, including Baltimore City and Montgomery County, operate programs designed to assist with ex-offender reentry.

The federal Second Chance Act of 2007 was designed to improve outcomes for people returning to the community from prisons and jails, nationwide. The Act authorizes federal grants to government agencies and community and faith-based organizations to provide employment assistance, substance abuse treatment, housing, family programming, mentoring, victims support, and other services that can help reduce reoffending and violations of probation and parole.

**State Expenditures:** The Maryland Department of Aging (MDoA) advises that its staff has been reduced over the last year and that it cannot support any additional responsibilities related to new councils/task forces without hiring additional staff. The Department of Legislative Services notes that while MDoA is represented on the council, it is not the staffing agency. Thus, it is assumed that MDoA can attend council meetings using existing budgeted resources.

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### **Additional Information**

**Prior Introductions:** None.

**Cross File:** None.

**Information Source(s):** Maryland Department of Aging, Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services, Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - February 11, 2016  
min/lgc

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