



STATE OF MARYLAND
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

FACSIMILE No.

410-576-6584 T DIAL No.

February 18, 2020

To: The Honorable Dereck E. Davis
Chair, Economic Matters Committee

From: The Office of the Attorney General

Re: House Bill 835 – Labor and Employment – Incentive Programs for Hiring and Retraining
– List (**Support**)

House Bill 835 would require the Maryland Department of Labor to develop a list of any federal or State incentive programs available to an employer who hires and trains formerly incarcerated individuals. The list must be made available and accessible on the main page of the Maryland Department of Labor website. Currently, the Maryland Department of Labor oversees various programs related to the reintegration of formerly incarcerated individuals into society through employment programs and apprenticeship training. House Bill 835 will simply make these incentive programs known to more employers.

Evidence shows that ex-offenders have a substantially lower probability of finding gainful employment, often leading to poor economic outcomes, and higher rates of recidivism.¹ According to a study, the number of employers willing to hire someone who has been convicted of a felony greatly increases with the introduction of tax credits, agency discount programs, and post-conviction work performance certificates.² If employers are given notice of available incentive programs, the rate of hiring formerly incarcerated individuals will increase.

¹ Priscillia Hunt, Rasanna Smart, et al., *"Incentivizing Employers to Hire Ex-Offenders, What Policies Are Most Effective"*, RAND Corporation (2018), https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_briefs/RB10003.html.

² *Id.*



House Bill 835 will help businesses and formerly incarcerated individuals, alike. House Bill 835 will grow the amount of these individuals in the workplace, leading to lower recidivism rates, and the ability to have gainful employment. For these reasons, the Office of the Attorney General urges a favorable report on House Bill 835.