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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

February 18, 2020

Testimony in Support

Of

House Bill 608-Correctional Services-Prerelease Unit for Women-Requirement to Operate

This legislation would create equal access and opportunity for incarcerated women under the authority of the Maryland Commissioner of Correction to receive the same or similar prerelease services as offered to incarcerated men.

If enacted, this legislation would require that:

The Commissioner of Correction **shall** operate a Prerelease Unit for Women.

The Maryland Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services (DPSCS) operates twenty-three (23) prisons and pre-prerelease units including the Maryland Correctional Institution for Women (MCIW) which is the only institution designed to house women committed to the Commissioner of Correction within the State of Maryland. Currently, MCIW houses all security levels: Maximum, Medium, Minimum, Prerelease and Work Release.

Currently, five (5) separate and distinct prerelease units are operated by DPSCS for the sole purpose of providing prerelease services to incarcerated men. Whereas, there are no separately operated prerelease units for incarcerated women.

Simply put, this legislation would remove disparities in the prerelease services offered to incarcerated women and make it a priority that the Commissioner of Correction provide the services incarcerated women are entitled to receive by operation of a prerelease unit for women.

I respectfully request a favorable report for House Bill 608.

Delegate Charlotte Crutchfield