



# UNITE HERE Local 25

**Testimony of Samuel Epps**  
Political Director, UNITE HERE Local 25

IN FAVOR of HB637/SB534 Jailhouse Witness Testimony

UNITE HERE Local 25, (Local 25 for short), is a hospitality workers union, which represents over 7,500 workers in the District of Columbia, Maryland, and Virginia. We represent workers across a huge cross section of departments from the front and back of the hotel. We are here to urge a favorable report of HB637/SB534

Criminal justice reform is becoming a core component of Local 25's advocacy. Our broken, racist criminal justice system disproportionately targets the working class people of color who make up our union. Many of our members are returning citizens. We are a union that believes in fairness, justice and equality. That's why, as a labor union, we must be at the forefront of criminal justice reform, to help those who have been wrongly convicted re-enter the workplace with dignity.

Our Union supports HB637 for three reasons:

1. It creates a statewide record for prosecutors to track jailhouse witnesses
2. It would put in place enhanced disclosure requirements
3. Victim Notification

As a matter of public policy, we believe that the state should ensure fairness and transparency in the front and back end of the sentencing process. .

HB637 would be a step in the right direction in ensuring that the state doesn't wrongly convict based on jailhouse testimony without proper safe guards in place. These reforms would have an outside, positive impact on the workers and people of color who are state has long marginalized.

For these reasons, UNITE HERE Local 25 urges a favorable report of HB637/SB 534.