



**THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES**  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

February 25, 2020

**Testimony in Support**

**Of**

**House Bill 801-Prerelease Unit for Women-Facilities and Services  
(Gender-Responsive Prerelease Act)**

This legislation would require the Commissioner of the Division of Correction to provide a comprehensive rehabilitative prerelease facility for incarcerated women that matches their security level and has services therein that are evidence-based and gender-responsive.

Currently, incarcerated women who are identified to receive prerelease services must participate in services while living in the general population with other incarcerated women, who are classified from minimum to maximum security. This creates discord amongst the incarcerated populations that can lead to further stress and trauma to women, who are within a few months to several years from release. These women deserve to live in surroundings that match their security level because they are the: (1) the least risk of violence; (2) least risk of escape; and (3) have obtained a record of satisfactory institutional behavior.

The prerelease programs that are offered should also reflect the data and information that indicates the impact of such programs on recidivism. Because of the special needs of incarcerated women, the prerelease programs should be gender responsive and utilize community partnerships in order to reduce barriers in obtaining housing, jobs, education, health care, childcare and child welfare, transportation, legal advocacy, case management and other needs.

Simply put, this legislation would separate the incarcerated women classified under the prerelease security level from the general prison population and provide the prerelease services needed for their successful re-entry back into society.

**I respectfully request a favorable report for House Bill 801.**

**Delegate Charlotte Crutchfield**