

# Quaker Voice of Maryland

February 8, 2021

**To:** Chair William C. Smith, Jr., Vice-Chair Senator Jeff Waldstreicher, and Members of the Maryland General Assembly Judicial Proceedings Committee

**From:** Quaker Voice of Maryland, Molly Finch, Clerk

**Re: SB 397 - Correctional Services - Diminution Credits - Education**

**Position: SUPPORT**

Quaker Voice of Maryland was formed in 2019 by Quaker Meetings throughout the State of Maryland to give Maryland Quakers a more effective voice in state-level issues that speak to our values. Our faith as Quakers includes the commitment to build a more peaceful and equitable society through legislation and policies that affect human dignity, well-being and non-violence.

We support SB 397 which would add a new category of sentence diminution credits for the attainment of major milestones based on educational accomplishments, such as satisfactory completion of a course or achieving a diploma.

People who have experienced incarceration are more likely to be successful in obtaining jobs and becoming contributing members once they re-enter society, which, in turn, reduces the likelihood of recidivism. This statement is not just an assumption; The Abell Foundation recently issued a study of education in our prisons and this was one of their findings.

In addition to the benefits of this bill for people experiencing incarceration, this bill will also lead to a decrease in costs associated with crime and punishment by reducing the number of people who end up back in the criminal justice system.

Quaker Voice of Maryland urges the members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee to support SB397.

In Light,

Molly Finch  
Clerk, Quaker Voice of Maryland  
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**Reference:**

The Abell Report, 2017, "Prison Education: Maximizing the Potential for Employment and Successful Community Reintegration" (<https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED591933.pdf>)