



House Judiciary Committee

March 8, 2022

House Bill 1058

Justice and Public Health Prioritization Council

Support

NCADD-Maryland supports House Bill 1058 to create a Justice and Public Health Prioritization Council. We are grateful to the sponsors for their focus on using a data-driven approach to develop a statewide framework of sentencing and corrections policies that are intended to:

- Continue to reduce the number of people incarcerated in Maryland;
- Reduce spending on corrections; and
- Reinvest in infrastructure, services, and strategies to prioritize public health, increase public safety, and reduce recidivism.

NCADD-Maryland has been before this committee for years supporting policy efforts that inch their way toward these goals. Creating a Council to further these efforts at this time would be helpful, especially as we enter an election cycle that will result in a significant number of new legislators, as well as a new Administration.

We hope that this Council would consider, along with the policy issues named in the bill, items such as full implementation of the 2019 legislation requiring treatment for people who are in jails and prisons with substance use disorders; Medicaid coverage for people prior to release from incarceration; consumer assistance with finding appropriate mental health and substance use disorder care that can prevent arrest and incarceration; and how a better trained and paid behavioral health workforce can help people in the community.

We urge a favorable report.

The Maryland Affiliate of the National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence (NCADD-Maryland) is a statewide organization that works to influence public and private policies on addiction, treatment, and recovery, reduce the stigma associated with the disease, and improve the understanding of addictions and the recovery process. We advocate for and with individuals and families who are affected by alcoholism and drug addiction.