

# HELPING OURSELVES TO TRANSFORM

EDUCATING AND PROMOTING  
MASS LIBERATION

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## **Written Testimony in support of HB0064/SB087 Office of the Attorney General Correctional Ombudsman**

I am Dr. Carmen Johnson the founder of Helping Ourselves to Transform and I support HB0064. Transparency and Accountability is important in operating corrections facilities. As an impacted woman who is innocent. I spent 3 years at a jail where I was subjected and targeted by physical abuse from guards and staff. I went through the remedy process to report the physical abuse, lack of medical care and no mental health treatment for me and the rest of the women.

Reporting these guards and staff crimes on me and many other women only lead me to subjections of more abuse. When I filed a lawsuit from jail, I was emphatically targeted even more. I remember once being strangled by guards with my winter scarf, being dragged across the floor as they kicked and spit on me until I blacked out. Not to mention not one attorney wanted to take my case of abuse on the east coast. Even when I came home 5 years ago - I still could not get an attorney to represent me on the abuse.

The 1996 Prison Litigation Act is a nightmare and it really should be dismantled. I never got a remedy from that process. Only more calculated abuse. I collected data for 2018 to 11/2022 on the 324 deaths that have happened in the Maryland jails and I ask myself - how many of these deaths are from retaliation from guards, staff, etc?

**HB0064 must pass and I support it** in order to protect other Maryland youth, women and men. Whether they did a crime or not. No one deserves to be treated like an animal, almost killed or killed because there is no protection, only more abuse at the hands of the people that are supposed to watch over loved ones behind the wall. .

Sincerely,



*Dr. Carmen R. Johnson, Founder*

*Author, Advocate, and Humanitarian*

*Lecture Specialist for prison and justice reform to Law Schools, Law Clinics, Students and the Community*

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