



Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry of Maryland

Testimony

SB 635- Landlords and Prospective Tenants - Residential Leases - Criminal History Review (Maryland Fair Chance in Housing Act)

TO: Senator William Smith, Chair and
Members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee
FROM: Karen “Candy” Clark, Criminal Justice Lead Advocate
Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry of Maryland =
DATE: March 7, 2024

The Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry (UULM-MD) is called to support SB 635 since it aligns with our belief in the use of compassion, and justice in our dealings with other humans.

Our returning incarcerated citizens have many barriers that make a successful reentry challenging and often unattainable. One difficulty is finding an affordable place to live. Currently when a tenant is applying for a lease, the tenant must submit documentation if he/she is a listed sexual offender and a record of any criminal history in the past 7 years. This bill lessens the years to 3 which should enable more people to find housing.

We need to stop worrying about being too hard or soft on crime and enact policies that are “smart on crime.” This bill is a step in the right direction to assist individuals in starting a new path for their lives, which will reduce the recidivism rate in Maryland which saves money for the Correctional System.

Again UULM-MD asks for a favorable vote on SB 635.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Clark

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