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Written Testimony ~ Senate Bill 123

My name is Ricardo Burks, a registered Democratic voter and a proud resident of the great state of Maryland. I am writing to express my wholehearted support for Senate Bill 123, which I believe is a crucial step towards justice and second chances for individuals who have demonstrated rehabilitation during incarceration.

I have personally experienced the life-changing influence of a second chance. After spending over 30 years behind bars, I emerged as a reformed and productive member of society, committed to being a law-abiding and tax-paying citizen. I was 63 years old when a second modification of my sentence allowed me the privilege of experiencing freedom. I spent decades building a body of work through actions that spoke to the reformation that had taken place in my life. The modification of sentence has allowed me to contribute positively to the community I now call home. I am currently employed as an advocate for the homeless in Baltimore City, bringing valuable and needed resources to the faceless population among us.

SB 123, in my view, is an essential piece of legislation that addresses the needs of countless model prisoners who, like me, have served decades with exemplary behavior and have exhausted all available legal remedies. These individuals have proven their commitment to personal growth and societal reintegration yet find themselves without recourse to present their case before a judge for reconsideration.

This bill represents an opportunity to rectify this injustice and provide a pathway for those who have served extended sentences to seek a fair and impartial review of their cases. By allowing individuals who have demonstrated genuine rehabilitation to have their day in court, SB 123 aligns with the principles of justice, fairness, and compassion that our great state stands for.

I urge you to consider the positive impact SB 123 could have on the lives of many deserving individuals who have paid their debt to society and are eager to contribute positively to our community. By supporting this bill, we create a more just and compassionate criminal justice system that recognizes the potential for redemption in those who have served lengthy sentences as model prisoners.

Thank you for your time, consideration, and dedication to the well-being of our community. I trust that you will give due attention to the importance of SB 123 and its potential to bring about positive change in the lives of many. Thank you for allowing my voice to be heard.

Sincerely,

  
Ricardo Burks