

# **SB 1036 FAV Testimony.pdf**

Uploaded by: Brandon Butler

Position: FAV

February 28, 2024

The Honorable William C. Smith, Jr., Chair  
Judicial Proceedings Committee  
2 East Miller Senate Office Building  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Dear Chair Smith and Members of the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee:

I am writing to express the Maryland Workforce Association, an association of Maryland's 13 local workforce boards, support for **Senate Bill 1036: Task Force on the Creation of a Division of Returning Citizens and Expanded Reentry Services - Establishment**. The measure will create a task force focused on the expansion of services for returning citizens.

The Association would also like to express its appreciation to the sponsor of this measure for including three representatives of "county workforce development programs" on the task force. The Local Workforce Development Boards in Maryland provide services focused on individuals with barriers to employment. Some of those individuals are those who are returning citizens. In fact, the Mayor's Office of Employment Development in Baltimore City has a job center at Mondawmin Mall focused on providing services to returning citizens. This is just one example of an innovative program that the Local Workforce Development Boards provide in Maryland.

In short, we look forward to lending our expertise to this task force and respectfully request the Committee's favorable consideration of this bill. Please do not hesitate to reach out to Brandon Butler, MWA's Executive Director for any questions or comments about our position. He can be reached at 240.434.5524, or [mwaexecdirector@gmail.com](mailto:mwaexecdirector@gmail.com).

Sincerely,

Kirkland Murray, President  
Maryland Workforce Association

#### **MWA Members**

**Anne Arundel County**  
Anne Arundel Workforce  
Development Corporation  
*Kirkland Murray, Executive Director*

**Baltimore City**  
Mayor's Office of Employment  
Development  
*MacKenzie Garvin, Director*

**Baltimore County**  
Baltimore County Department of  
Economic and Workforce  
Development  
*Neishall Schyler, WIOA Ops.  
Manager*

**Carroll County**  
Carroll County Workforce  
Development  
*Heather Lee Powell, Manager*

**Frederick County**  
Frederick County Workforce  
Services  
*Michelle Day, Director*

**Howard County**  
Howard County Office of Workforce  
Development  
*Francine Trout, Director*

**Lower Shore**  
Lower Shore Workforce Alliance  
(Somerset, Wicomico, & Worcester,  
Counties)  
*Leslie Porter-Cabell, Workforce  
Director*

**Montgomery County** WorkSource  
Montgomery, Inc. *Anthony  
Featherstone, Executive Director*

**Prince George's County**  
Prince George's County Workforce  
Development Board *Walter  
Simmons, Executive Director*

**Southern Maryland**  
Southern Maryland Job Source  
(Calvert, Charles, & St. Mary's  
Counties)  
*Ruthy Davis, Director*

**Susquehanna Region**  
Susquehanna Workforce Network,  
Inc. (Cecil & Harford Counties)  
*Kimberly Justus, Executive Director*

**Upper Shore**  
Upper Shore Workforce Investment  
Board (Caroline, Dorchester, Kent,  
Queen Anne's, & Talbot Counties)  
*Dan Schneckeburger, Executive  
Director*

**Western Maryland**  
Western Maryland Consortium  
(Allegany, Garrett &  
Washington Counties)  
*Deborah Gilbert, Executive Director*

**SB 1036 Fav.pdf**

Uploaded by: Christopher West

Position: FAV

CHRIS WEST  
Legislative District 42  
Baltimore and Carroll Counties

Judicial Proceedings Committee



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THE SENATE OF MARYLAND  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

March 5<sup>th</sup>, 2024

The Maryland State Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee  
The Honorable William C. Smith, Jr.  
2 East Miller Senate Building  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

**Re: Senate Bill 1036: *Task Force on the Creation of a Division of Returning Citizens and Expanded Re-entry Services - Establishment***

Dear Chairman Smith and Members of the Committee,

By now, an acute observer might have noticed a recurring theme with my bills this session: the preemption of criminality and the prevention of repeat offenses. Senate Bill 1036 falls into the latter category.

This bill establishes the Task Force on the Creation of a Division of Returning Citizens and Expanded Re-entry Services to focus on state prisoners who are scheduled to be released from prison or who have recently been released from prison. The Task Force will be responsible for assessing measures of re-entry success, coordinating existing department and community re-entry programs, removing barriers to re-entry, and connecting incarcerated individuals with pre and post release assistance.

More specifically, the Task Force will identify and assess the current re-entry services that exist in the State, including gaps that currently exist, assess the markers of successful re-entry and develop a plan to establish a permanent Division of Returning Citizens within the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services.

The Task Force will also establish a plan to expand housing, transportation, employment, social services, healthcare, education, and legal services to individuals who have just been released from incarceration. The housing plan will render necessary assistance in finding halfway houses, family homes or apartments for released prisoners. The employment plan will render necessary assistance in finding employment for released prisoners, including assistance in obtaining vital documents and in preparing resumes. The health services plan will render necessary assistance in finding healthcare providers, mental health services, substance abuse counseling and the like. The education plan will render assistance in connecting to GED programs and postsecondary education, as needed.

The bill gives the Task Force 18 months to complete its work, requiring its report to be submitted by December 31, 2025.

In conclusion, it is simply intuitive that it is counterproductive to both justice and the public safety of the state if we do not give released individuals the tools that they need to maximize their chances of succeeding once they are no longer behind bars. This is the best way to prevent recidivism.

I appreciate the Committee's consideration of Senate Bill 1036 and will be happy to answer any questions the Committee may have.

**SB 1036F Task Force.pdf**

Uploaded by: Dr. Carmen Johnson

Position: FAV



# Favorable Vote Request

3-4-2024

## Task Force on the Creation of a Division of Returning Citizens and Expanded 3 Reentry Services – Establishment **SB1036F**

Dear Senator West

I am asking for a favorable vote on SB1036F because this bill will decisively establish a Task Force on the Creation of a Division of Returning Citizens and Expanded Reentry Services, this mandate demands the Task Force deliver a comprehensive report to the General Assembly by a specified deadline.

This initiative is a bold step forward in championing the cause of returning citizens, ensuring they receive the support and services necessary for a successful reintegration into society. This legislation underscores our commitment to expanding reentry services and solidifying the infrastructure needed to support individuals transitioning from incarceration back into the community.

Please vote on SB1036F favorable.

Sincerely,



***Dr. Carmen R. Johnson, Founder***

***Certified Paralegal with Advanced Studies in Criminal Law, Author, Advocate & Humanitarian.  
Lecture Specialist for prison and justice reform to Law Schools, Law Clinics, Students and the  
Community and a lobbyist in the State of Maryland***

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*Maryland Equitable Justice Collaborative sub-committee(s)*

*Chairwoman, Advocacy and Legislation for MSARC re-entry board formerly created by the US States Attorney for the District of Maryland.*

*The National Congress of Black Women Inc. Washington, DC - Life Time Member*

*Member of The Ladies of HOPE Ministries, Inc*

*Director of Court Watch & Judicial Accountability-LAR of Prince George's County*

*Member of Returning Citizen Affairs Division (RCAD) a pillar of the County Executive of Prince George's County*

*Partner with The Court Services and Offenders Supervision Agency (CSOSA)*

*Member of the Maryland Agriculture Council, Inc.*

*Member of CCE Council for Court of Excellence*

*Member of Progressive Prison Ministries, White Collar support Group*

*Member of The Uplift - "Together We Rise"*

*Member of Progressive Maryland- REWG*

*Member of Community Family Life Services, Speaker's Bureau*

*Member of First Alliance Consulting, LLC*

*Member of the National Criminal Justice Association*

*Member of ACTCP - ADA Legal Advocate Trainee*

*Endorsed by Maryland Alliance Justice Reform*

*Parkmont School in Washington, DC*

*Montgomery County High School Volunteer Center -Montgomery County School System*





**Maryland Catholic Conference\_FAV\_SB1036.pdf**

Uploaded by: Jenny Kraska

Position: FAV



**MARYLAND  
CATHOLIC  
CONFERENCE**

**March 06, 2024**

**SB 1036**

**Task Force on the Creation of a Division of Returning Citizens and Expanded Reentry Services -  
Establishment**

**Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee**

**Position: Favorable**

The Maryland Catholic Conference (MCC) offers this testimony in support of Senate Bill 1036. The Catholic Conference is the public policy representative of the three (arch)dioceses serving Maryland, which together encompass over one million Marylanders. Statewide, their parishes, schools, hospitals, and numerous charities combine to form our state's second largest social service provider network, behind only our state government.

Senate Bill 1036 would establish the Task Force on the Creation of a Division of Returning Citizens and Expanded Reentry Services. This legislation will help make important strides towards promoting the successful reintegration of individuals returning from incarceration into our communities.

We are called to recognize the inherent dignity of every human person and to seek the rehabilitation and redemption of those who have been involved in the criminal justice system. Returning citizens face numerous challenges as they transition back into society, including barriers to employment, housing, education, and healthcare. By establishing a Task Force dedicated to exploring the creation of a Division of Returning Citizens and Expanded Reentry Services, we demonstrate our commitment to supporting individuals in their journey toward healing, restoration, and full participation in community life.

Our Catholic faith emphasizes the importance of solidarity and the common good, urging us to work together to build a society that upholds the dignity and rights of all its members. Investing in reentry services and supports not only benefits returning citizens but also strengthens families, communities, and society as a whole. By providing returning citizens with the resources, support, and opportunities they need to rebuild their lives, we contribute to safer, healthier, and more prosperous communities for everyone.

The provision in the legislation that requires the Task Force to submit a report to the General Assembly is very helpful as it underscores the importance of transparency, accountability, and informed decision-making in this critical area. This report will provide valuable insights and recommendations for policymakers to consider as they work to develop and implement effective reentry services and supports.

The MCC appreciates your consideration and, for these reasons, respectfully requests a favorable report on Senate Bill 1036.



# **SB 1036 - Task Force on the Creation of a Division**

Uploaded by: Kam Bridges

Position: FAV

# JOTF JOB OPPORTUNITIES TASK FORCE

*Advocating better skills, jobs, and incomes*

## Testimony in Support of Senate Bill 1036

### Task Force on the Creation of a Division of Returning Citizens and Expanded Reentry Services - Establishment

TO: Hon. William C. Smith, Jr., and Members of the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee

FROM: Job Opportunities Task Force

DATE: March 5, 2024

The Job Opportunities Task Force (JOTF) is an independent, nonprofit organization that develops and advocates policies and programs to increase the skills, job opportunities, and incomes of low-wage workers and job seekers in Maryland. **JOTF supports Senate Bill 1036, which would establish the Task Force on the Creation of a Division of Returning Citizens and Expanded Reentry Services to identify gaps in reentry services currently provided in the State, develop a plan to establish a Division of Returning Citizens within DPSCS, and develop a plan to expand specified services for individuals in the State after release from incarceration.**

According to a special report by the U.S. Department of Justice [2018 Update on Prisoner Recidivism: A 9-Year Follow-up Period \(2005-2014\)](#), state prisoner recidivism rates average around 68 percent for rearrests within the first three years post-release. And according to a [report](#) by The Sentencing Project, a research and advocacy center working for decarceration in the United States and seeking to address racial disparities in the criminal justice system, a major contribution to recidivism rates throughout the United States is lack of resources or connection to resources that aid prisoners' prosocial integration into the community. People exiting prison from long-term confinement need stronger support around them. Many people exhibit a low crime risk but have high psychological, financial, and vocational demands that have been greatly exacerbated by their lengthy incarceration.

JOTF is in full support of SB 1036, which takes these factors into account and seeks to identify gaps in reentry services and address them. A system that adequately addresses the myriad issues that returning citizens have while trying to return into society is common sense solution that directly addresses the biggest factors for recidivism. This legislation actually gives formerly incarcerated people the tools to start on the right path, as opposed to releasing them with no support system and feigning surprise when they reoffend.

**For these reasons, JOTF supports Senate Bill 1036 and urges a favorable report.**

**For more information, contact:**

Kam Bridges / Senior Public Policy Advocate / Kam@jotf.org

**SB1036 FAV.pdf**

Uploaded by: Morgan Mills

Position: FAV

March 5, 2024

Chair Smith, Vice Chair Waldstreicher, and distinguished members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee,

NAMI Maryland and our 11 local affiliates across the state represent a network of more than 58,000 families, individuals, community-based organizations, and service providers. NAMI Maryland is a 501(c)(3) non-profit dedicated to providing education, support, and advocacy for people living with mental illnesses, their families, and the wider community.

NAMI MD supports comprehensive re-entry policies and programs for people with mental illness who are returning to their community after a period of incarceration. People with mental illness are overrepresented in our nation's criminal justice system. Of the over 32,000 people held in our state's jails and prisons, nearly 2 in 5 have a history of mental illness.

Of those who are incarcerated, 95% will one day be released and will face a variety of challenges as they re-enter their communities.<sup>1</sup> Re-entry — the period of return to a community from incarceration — can be marked by heightened stress, isolation, and hardship. For people with mental illness and substance use disorders (SUD), there is increased vulnerability and risk. Due to the lack of timely access to critical services and support for their health or mental health condition, these individuals are at a higher risk of repeated incarceration. In fact, the risk of death by suicide or opioid overdose dramatically increases in the first days and weeks after an individual is released from jail or prison.<sup>2</sup>

When leaving jail or prison, it's important to have as much support as possible to be successful and healthy. Successful re-entry begins in the weeks and months before someone is released. Gaining access to housing, social supports (food, employment, education) and community supports (family, friends, social networks) are all critical for successful reintegration. Without connections to community supports, recently released individuals are at a higher risk of recidivism. Access to mental health care is equally important. In fact, research suggests that those who have health care coverage upon re-entry are more likely to engage in services and supports that reduce recidivism.<sup>3</sup>

NAMI MD believes that public policies should encourage comprehensive re-entry planning, including:

- Providing a warm handoff to community-based mental health and substance use disorder care;
- Increasing access to medications; and
- Connecting to supports, like housing and food assistance

These policies will more effectively address mental health care needs immediately before and during re-entry — and help save lives. For these reasons, we urge a favorable report.

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<sup>1</sup> [Offender Reentry: Correctional Statistics, Reintegration into the Community, and Recidivism \(fas.org\)](#)

<sup>2</sup> [Mortality After Prison Release: Opioid Overdose and Other Causes of Death, Risk Factors, and Time Trends From 1999 to 2009 - PMC \(nih.gov\)](#)

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.kff.org/uninsured/issue-brief/health-coverage-and-care-for-the-adult-criminal-justice-involved-population/>

**SB1036 - Amended.pdf**

Uploaded by: Anne Kirsch

Position: FWA





**PREPARE**  
PREpare for PARole and REentry

Anne Bocchini Kirsch  
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(410) 994-6136

### **SB1036 - Task Force on the Creation of a Division of Returning Citizens and Expanded Reentry Services - Establishment - Support with Amendment**

As Maryland works to reduce mass incarceration and people come home, I can't think of anything more important than to coordinate efforts and expand reentry infrastructure. This has been discussed from a local level (for example, Baltimore City recently heard a bill to create an Office of Returning Citizens within MORCA), and goes all the way to the Federal, with BJA releasing grants to support this purpose. I strongly support the creation of this task force.

My first concern is the naming of specific private nonprofits within the legislation, something that is both irregular and internally inconsistent within the bill itself. This strips the Governor's ability to staff the task force as he sees fit, taking into consideration things like organizational longevity, operating budget, percent of the population returning to their service area, number of clients, programmatic inclusion of housing, workforce, mental health and substance use services, and other considerations the Governor may have. It creates a mutual obligation between Maryland and specific private nonprofit organizations regardless of outside circumstances, and requires legislative action for the Governor to replace these specific seats should the need arise due to time, funding, or other constraints. It would be more economic to strike the overly specific page 2 lines 15-16 and amend page 2 line 22 to invite four organizations. The names of the specific individuals from the organizations on lines 15-16 could then be submitted to the Governor's Office for approval without the potential problems created by citing them by name in the legislation itself.

My second concern is the fact that only a single person with lived experience of incarceration in Maryland is included on page 2 line 5. Surely those with lived experience of reentry in Maryland should be highly included - perhaps one who served 10 years or less, one who served 10-25 years, and one who served over 25 years, honoring the important and differing experiences faced by these individuals.

**PREPARE**  
**PO Box 9738 Towson, MD 21284**

**PICD Written Testimony - SB 1036 Final w amendmen**

Uploaded by: Dorianne Meloy

Position: FWA

**CANDACE McLAREN LANHAM**  
*Chief Deputy Attorney General*

**CAROLYN A. QUATTROCKI**  
*Deputy Attorney General*

**LEONARD J. HOWIE III**  
*Deputy Attorney General*

**CHRISTIAN E. BARRERA**  
*Chief Operating Officer*

**ZENITA WICKHAM HURLEY**  
*Chief, Equity, Policy, and Engagement*

**PETER V. BERNS**  
*General Counsel*



**DORIANNE A. MELOY**  
*Counsel*  
People's Insurance Counsel Division

**ANTHONY G. BROWN**  
*Attorney General*

**STATE OF MARYLAND**  
**OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL**  
**PEOPLE'S INSURANCE COUNSEL DIVISION**

March 4, 2024

**TO:** The Honorable William C. Smith, Jr.  
Chair, Judicial Proceedings Committee

**FROM:** Dorianne A. Meloy, Counsel  
People's Insurance Counsel Division

**Re:** SB 1036 – Corrections - Task Force on the Creation of a Division of Returning Citizens and Expanded Reentry Services - Establishment (FWA)

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The People's Insurance Counsel Division of the Office of the Attorney General (the "Division") supports with amendments Senate Bill 1036 sponsored by Senator West.

The Division reviews medical professional liability and homeowners' insurance matters before the Maryland Insurance Commissioner on behalf of Maryland consumers. As part of its legislative mandate, the Division may recommend to the General Assembly legislation on any matter that the Division considers would promote the interests of insurance consumers. See, SG Article 6-307(d).

This bill establishes a task force to report on the creation of a division of returning citizens within the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services and to develop a plan to expand services for individuals after release from incarceration. One of the areas of proposed expanded services is housing.

Barriers for Maryland consumers for housing may include their ability or inability to obtain homeowners/renters' insurance. The definition of eligible/ineligible persons can impact returning citizens' ability to obtain housing. Maryland prohibits unfair discrimination in underwriting. See,

Md Insurance Article 27-501. In the case of homeowner's insurance, standards reasonably related to an insurer's economic and business purpose do not require statistical validation for convictions: within the preceding 5-year period of arson or within the preceding 3-year period of a crime which directly increases the hazard insured against. See, Md Insurance Article 27-501(j)(i) and (iv).

One of the challenges facing individuals upon reentry to society is available housing. The ability to own and maintain a home either as an owner or renter is a step towards economic independence, stability and generational wealth. Many property management companies require renters to maintain renter's insurance. The inability to qualify for affordable homeowners' or renters' insurance impacts a basic life necessity - housing.

The bill establishes task force members. The Division recommends that the Attorney General of Maryland, or the designee of the Attorney General be a task force member. Additionally, the Division recommends that a member of the Maryland Equitable Justice Collaborative (MEJC) be added as a task force member without a need for the appointment to be made by the Governor of Maryland. MEJC is a collaborative partnership launched by Maryland's Attorney General and the Public Defender to address mass incarceration. The one representative would be appointed by MEJC's co-chairs, the Attorney General of Maryland and the Public Defender. Alternatively, the representative member of MEJC appointed to the task force be the Governor would be a member recommended by MEJC's co-chairs.

A task force established to consider barriers to housing for returning citizens would benefit Maryland consumers.

For these reasons, the Division requests the Judicial Proceedings Committee issue a favorable report with amendments.

Cc: Senator Chris West  
Members, Judicial Proceedings Committee

By: Dorianne A. Meloy, Counsel  
People's Insurance Counsel Division of the Office of the Attorney General of Maryland

Proposed Amendments to Senate Bill 1036  
(First Reading File Bill)

Amendment No. 1:

On page 2, after line 3, insert "(9) the Attorney General of Maryland, or his designee; and (10) one representative of the Maryland Equitable Justice Collaborative to be appointed by the co-chairs of the Maryland Equitable Justice Collaborative; and"

Amendment No. 2:

On page 2, line 4, strike "(9)", and substitute (11)"

Amendment No. 3:

On page 2, in lines 17 and 18, strike "one representative of the Maryland Equitable Justice Collaborative;"

Amendment No. 4:

On page 2, at line 19, strike "(x)", and substitute "(ix)"

On page 2, at line 21, strike "(xi)", and substitute "(x)"

On page 2, at line 22, strike "(xii)", and substitute "(xi)"

**SB 1036\_MDL\_Letter of Information.docx.pdf**

Uploaded by: Andrew Fulginiti

Position: INFO

**Senate Bill 1036**

Date: March 4, 2024  
Committee: Senate Judicial Proceedings  
Bill Title: Task Force on the Creation of a Division of Returning Citizens and Expanded Reentry Services - Establishment  
Re: Letter of Information

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SB1036 establishes the Task Force on the Creation of a Division of Returning Citizens and Expanded Reentry Services. The Task Force must, among other things, develop a plan to establish a Division of Returning Citizens within the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services (DPSCS) and develop a plan to expand certain services, such as employment services, for returning citizens.

The Maryland Department of Labor's (MDL) Division of Workforce Development and Adult Learning's (DWDAL) mission is to ensure businesses have the skilled workforce they need to compete in the global marketplace. The Department achieves this goal by building strong pipelines of qualified workers – including individuals with barriers to employment, such as incarcerated individuals (II) and returning citizens – through access to the workforce system's employment and training resources. The Division provides these services through a variety of Offices, including the Office of Correctional Education (OCE). Additionally, MDL administers the Correctional Education Council (CEC) - composed of members of MDL, DPSCS, and the business community - to develop employment opportunities that will allow returning citizens to use the skills they obtained while incarcerated.

**MDL notes that many of the employment components that SB1036 requires the Task Force to develop and/or plan include efforts that already occur within DWDAL. Additionally, the Department requests that the Committee consider how the Task Force's work might overlap with the existing activities of the CEC.**

The OCE oversees academic, occupational, transitional, special education, and library programming within State prisons in strong partnership with DPSCS. OCE is situated within MDL to allow for a streamlined connection to adult education and job services during incarceration and after release. Programming inside the State's correctional facilities serves as a foundation for IIs to become successful, self-sufficient contributors to their communities at the conclusion of a prison sentence. Activities that OCE provides include, but are not limited to: Auto Repair training, Pre-Apprenticeship Welding, Certified Peer Recovery Specialist training, Financial Literacy courses, and Life Skills for Reentry courses, among many others.

DWDAL provides additional services to returning citizens through the Reentry Navigator initiative. Reentry Navigators are a team of employment specialists located within the American Job Centers (AJCs) across the state of Maryland. Their role is to connect justice-involved jobseekers with businesses. The navigators meet with pre-release individuals in State correctional facilities to learn how they can connect individuals to employment and training opportunities. The services are individualized and tailored to the needs of the specific customer. To ensure the continuity of this service, the Navigators reconnect with customers *after* release, too, to help ease the difficulty of becoming re-employed. Lastly, they continually establish a network of employer contacts who are interested in hiring their clients. More information on the Reentry Navigator Program can be found on MD Labor’s website: <https://www.labor.maryland.gov/employment/reentry.shtml>.

Lastly, pursuant to Maryland Annotated Code, Labor and Employment Art. §§ 11-901-902, the Correctional Education Council (CEC) was established in 2008 to oversee the implementation of the DWDAL’s Correctional Education program. Topics at CEC meetings include classroom instruction, implementation of the Tablet Program, Special Education initiatives, expanded library resources, increased occupational opportunities, transition services, and opportunities for post-secondary education.

CEC is statutorily required to consist of 14 members, four of which are State residents appointed by the Governor, two representing the business community, a former II, and one member of the general public. There are also several ex officio posts including the DPSCS and MDL secretaries. The CEC is tasked with developing and recommending educational and workforce training programs for CE programming in DPSCS prisons. Each year, the CEC submits an annual report to the Maryland General Assembly. The Correctional Education Council FY23 Annual Report is available here: <https://www.labor.maryland.gov/ce/cereport2023.pdf>.

The Department respectfully asks the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee to consider this information in their evaluation of the bill and is available to respond to questions.