

NICOLE A. WILLIAMS, ESQ.
Legislative District 22
Prince George's County

Judiciary Committee

Chair, Public Safety Subcommittee

Vice Chair, Democratic Caucus

Chair, Prince George's
County House Delegation



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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

January 26, 2024

The Honorable Delegate Luke Clippinger

Chair of the House Judiciary Committee

6 Bladen Street, Room 101

Annapolis, Maryland 21401

House Bill 317

Good afternoon, Chair Clippinger, Vice Chair Bartlett, and the members of the House Judiciary Committee. I am Delegate Nicole Williams, and I will be testifying in favor of House Bill 317, also known as **Motion for Reduction of Sentence**. This Legislation allows a State's Attorney to file for a reduction of a defendant's sentence during their active incarceration. Currently, a defendant is entitled to only a single petition to request a reduction of sentence. This bill would expand the opportunity outside of the current sole one-time opportunity. This is important especially if the State believes that the defendant's incarceration should be reduced. This bill ensures that victims will be notified and allowed to file a response within 60 days after the filing of the motion. According to "For the People", an organization committed to criminal justice reform, the law ensures a system of checks and balances by vesting judges with the ultimate decision.

We understand the concerns regarding the release of incarcerated individuals. However, this decision is not made lightly and would be determined by the State's Attorney to file such a motion, and after a judge has extensively reviewed the information. This includes a defendant's physical, mental, and behavioral examinations, the testimony of the victim's family, and the steps taken toward rehabilitation during incarceration. When dealing with criminal cases, a reduction of sentences will only occur if the judge believes that it would be in the best interest of the individual and society as a whole. Incarceration has a detrimental effect on an individual, their family, and their community. Allowing this bill gives incarcerated citizens a second chance at life. If someone demonstrates an extensive effort to change and better themselves during their

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period of incarceration, it would be an injustice not to revisit their original sentence and enhance their chances of a brighter future.

For these reasons, I urge this committee to give a favorable report on House Bill 317.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Nicole Williams', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Delegate Nicole A. Williams, Esq.