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**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HOUSE BILL 627 - ELECTION LAW –
AUTOMATIC VOTER REGISTRATION –
STATE CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES
February 13, 2024
By Charlie Cooper, President**

Get Money Out–Maryland is an all-volunteer force seeking to get big money out of our political system and make elections fairer. Ten thousand Marylanders have actively supported our work. We believe that every citizen should have equal access to the ballot as a voter or as a candidate. We also work to regulate the role of big money in our elections and to reduce the disproportionate influence of concentrated wealth on our political system.

We actively supported House Bill 980 in the 2015 session, which became law and provided that people convicted of a felony are eligible to vote once they are returned to the community through probation or parole. House Bill 627 will make sure that those so released have a greater chance of actually registering to vote.

HB 627 employs a common-sense mechanism that merely adds the Department of Corrections and Public Safety (DCPS) to the list of state agencies that must transmit voter registration data to the State Board of Elections. The release of an inmate into the community would become a triggering event for the transmission of data. In this way, returning citizens would receive an encouraging signal from the DCPS that they are eligible to vote.

We urge the Ways and Means Committee to issue a favorable report for HB 627.