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January 27, 2026

TO: The Honorable William Smith
Chair, Judicial Proceedings Committee

FROM: Tiffany Clark
Director, Legislative Affairs, Office of the Attorney General

RE: Senate Bill 187 – Correctional Services - Comprehensive Rehabilitative
Prerelease Services - Female Incarcerated Individuals

The Office of the Attorney General (OAG) supports **Senate Bill 187 – Prerelease Unit for Women – Establishment and Services** in concept, with the amendments described below. SB 187 proposes to establish a comprehensive prerelease facility for incarcerated women in Baltimore City, providing rehabilitative services to support successful community reintegration.

As Maryland's elected Chief Legal Officer, the Attorney General supervises and directs the legal business of the State. The Office of the Attorney General advises and represents State institutions, agencies, boards, commissions, and officials, while representing Maryland's interests in state and federal litigation. The Office uses the authority of the Office to enforce the rule of law, protect Marylanders, and promote the public good.

We appreciate the intent of this legislation to address systemic challenges faced by incarcerated women, particularly women of color, as they transition back into their communities. This bill aligns with the Maryland Equity and Justice Commission (MEJC) Recommendation #12, which calls for expanding and improving community-based reentry programming. The legislation takes important steps toward closing reentry service gaps, reducing racial disparities, and fostering sustainable reintegration.

However, we note that several critical service provisions included in SB 632 from the 2025 session have been removed from the current version. To ensure effective implementation and

meaningful support for incarcerated women's successful reentry, we respectfully recommend restoring the following provisions:

1. **Public Health Benefits Assistance:** Mandate screening and application assistance for Medicaid, SNAP, and other public benefits prior to release.
2. **Stable Housing Guarantee:** Require provision of stable housing for at least one year post-release, addressing a primary barrier to successful reintegration.
3. **Document Procurement:** Ensure acquisition of essential identification documents including birth certificates, state-issued identification, and Social Security cards before release.
4. **Education, Training, and Employment Engagement:** Require active participation in educational, vocational, or employment programming as part of prerelease services.
5. **Transportation Protections:** Prohibit requiring women to be transported to co-educational facilities to access services that should be available at the prerelease unit.
6. **Annual Reporting:** Restore the Social Work Unit's annual reporting requirement to ensure transparency and program accountability.
7. **Performance Incentive Funding:** Reinstate the \$500,000 Performance Incentive Grant Fund to support evidence-based programming and measurable outcomes.

With these amendments, this legislation will provide comprehensive, gender-responsive support that addresses the full spectrum of challenges incarcerated women face during reentry, from securing basic documentation and housing to accessing healthcare and employment opportunities. We have shared these recommendations with the bill sponsor and remain available to work collaboratively with the Committee to refine this legislation.

For the foregoing reasons, the Office of the Attorney General respectfully urges the Committee to give SB 187 a favorable report with the amendments described above.

Cc: