



TESTIMONY FOR SB0187

Correctional Services – Comprehensive Rehabilitative Prerelease Services – Female Incarcerated Individuals

Bill Sponsor: Senator Mary Washington

Committee: Senate Judicial Proceedings

Organization Submitting: Maryland Legislative Coalition

Person Submitting: Aileen Alex, Cochair

Position: FAVORABLE

Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

I am submitting this testimony in support of SB0187 on behalf of the Maryland Legislative Coalition. We are an association of unpaid citizen advocates—individuals and grassroots groups in every district across the state—representing and supporting more than 30,000 Marylanders.

SB0187 is an emergency bill that takes long-overdue steps to ensure that women in Maryland’s correctional system have access to the comprehensive prerelease services they need to successfully reenter their communities. The bill updates the required specifications for a dedicated prerelease facility for female incarcerated individuals, to include a location in Baltimore, and directs the Department of General Services to oversee and fast-track the procurement process for its construction. It also requires the Commissioner of Correction to make gender-responsive services available—programming that recognizes the distinct experiences, trauma histories, and reentry needs of women. Finally, the bill sets a clear deadline for a comprehensive plan by September 1, 2026, ensuring that this work moves forward without further delay.

Maryland has talked for years about the need for a women’s prerelease center, yet the absence of such a facility continues to harm women who are preparing to return home. Without access to trauma-informed counseling, job training, parenting support, and other reentry services, women face higher barriers to stability, employment, and family reunification. SB0187 provides the structure and accountability needed to finally deliver on the state’s commitment to these individuals.

This bill directly advances the mission of the Maryland Legislative Coalition. Our work is rooted in equity, dignity, and the belief that government systems must support—not hinder—people’s ability to rebuild their lives. SB0187 strengthens public safety by investing in rehabilitation rather than recidivism. It promotes fairness by ensuring that women receive the same level of prerelease support that men already have access to. And it reinforces our commitment to a justice system that recognizes humanity and fosters successful reentry.

For these reasons, we respectfully urge a **FAVORABLE** report on SB0187.