



THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF MARYLAND

Support – SB 70
Senate Finance Committee
Correctional Institutions - Correctional Education Council - Mandatory Education Program
Requirements
1/30/2020

Good afternoon Chairwoman Kelley, Vice Chair Feldman and members of the Senate Finance Committee. My name is the Rev. Kathy Shahinian, Legislative Liaison for the Episcopal Diocese of Maryland and today we are asking for your support of SB 70.

Education can be a gateway to social and economic mobility. Sadly however, this opportunity is being scaled back or reduced to a significant portion of more than 2.3 million individuals currently incarcerated in the United States.

“Correctional education” refers to a wide variety of educational programs available to men and women under correctional supervision. The types of programs range from basic skills training to college and vocational training that provide the skills necessary for people to obtain employment upon release.

Correctional Education programs can play a critical role in the successful reentry of individuals returning home from incarceration. A growing body of research has shown a link between education programs, decreased recidivism rates, and positive employment outcomes. For example, a study from the Rand Corporation found that individuals who participated in a correctional education program had 43 percent lower odds of recidivating than those who did not, with 13 percent higher odds of obtaining a job after release.

Because the prison system can be a painful and damaging process for inmates and their families, these individuals are often in great need of being treated with dignity and compassion, as our faith calls us to do. Providing education is a good way to do it.

We ask your support for SB 70.