



TO: The Honorable William C. Smith, Jr., Chair
Members, Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee
The Honorable Mary Washington

FROM: Pamela Metz Kasemeyer
J. Steven Wise
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DATE: February 26, 2020

RE: **SUPPORT** – Senate Bill 684 – *Correctional Services – Prerelease Unit for Women – Facilities and Services (Gender-Responsive Prerelease Act)*

The Maryland Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (MDAAP) is a statewide association representing more than 1,100 pediatricians and allied pediatric and adolescent healthcare practitioners in the State and is a strong and established advocate promoting the health and safety of all the children we serve. On behalf of MDAAP, we submit this letter of **support** for Senate Bill 684.

Senate Bill 684 requires the Commissioner of Corrections to provide a comprehensive rehabilitative prerelease facility for eligible female inmates that matches security level on a validated gender-responsive risk measure and make evidence-based and innovative programs and practices available to female inmates at the facility. A majority of incarcerated women were primary caregivers of children prior to their incarceration. Many are single mothers. Pre-release facilities can prepare women to reintegrate back into society by providing access to job training, employment, community resources, and reentry planning assistance within a less restrictive and safe environment.

Incarcerated women in Maryland need access to community and opportunity through a separate pre-release facility that provides trauma-informed and gender-responsive services. Providing such services will not only benefit the women but also their families as it will enhance the likelihood of successful reentry and the ability for these women to be successful and self-supporting. A favorable report is requested.

For more information call:

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