

## Maryland Citizens United for the Rehabilitation of Errant

March 5, 2020

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### SENATE JUDICIAL HEARING MARCH 5, 2020 ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

#### PLEASE SUPPORT SB 817

**Good afternoon Ladies and Gentleman, as a mother of a Lifer, and an advocate for positive change in the Criminal Justice System, I respectfully ask that this committee use the data and statistics and fact checking to get “smart on crime” and cross the aisles to come together to fix this broken system and do the right thing!**

**Allow the PROFESSIONAL Appointed Parole Board to do their job! Take POLITICS out of the Criminal Justice System, understand the suffering from BOTH sides, there are no winners in none of this!**

**I, wish to thank all the sponsors on record for their support of this bill, we will not forget! In conclusion, Tax payers money can be put to better use, than warehousing people into old age, to keep our community safe!**

**Sincerely, Lea Green**

funds efforts with government entities, private organizations, and the community to advance public safety, reduce crime and juvenile delinquency, and serve victims.

### **Will this work?**

By comparison, over a seven year period, Georgia's legislature has implemented over a dozen critical pieces of legislation directed at making their State both fairer and safer. Like Maryland's comprehensive Justice Reinvestment Act of 2016, Georgia based its initiatives on creating a special council on Criminal Justice Reform for Georgians. As Georgia's Republican governor put it a few years ago: "For violent and repeat offenders, we will make you pay for your crimes. For other offenders who want to change their lives, we will provide the opportunity to do so with Day Reporting Centers, Drug, DUI and Mental Health Courts and expanded probation and treatment options." Changes in Georgia's laws are expected to avert the projected 8 percent increase in the prison population and the associated cumulative cost of \$264 million.

Across the nation, no fewer than 17 states have shifted resources away from prison construction in favor of treatment and supervision as a better means of reducing recidivism. For example in Kentucky, new legislation has reserved prison beds for the most serious offenders and re-focused resources on community supervision and evidence-based programs. As a result, the state is projected to reduce its prison population by more than 3,000 over the next 10 years—saving more than \$400 million.

And finally we want to point at Baltimore's own success story. Safe Streets is an evidence-based violence prevention and interruption program that works to reduce shootings and homicides in high violence areas. Safe Streets is based on the premise that violence is a disease that can be prevented using disease-control methods. Safe Streets helps to provide young people with alternatives to a life of crime and violence, and has significantly reduced shootings and homicides in the targeted areas where it has been implemented. A recent report authored by Daniel Webster, Johns Hopkins Center for Gun Policy and Research (May 2016), found the largest effects on nonfatal shootings were attributed to Safe Streets.

Clearly, incarceration is not the answer in every criminal case. Maryland can and should stay the course with Justice Reinvestment policies of reducing incarceration, increasing rehabilitation, and using taxpayer savings to treat drug addicts and create more opportunities for honest employment in our communities! With the Governor's participation, the GOCCP can organize a broad comprehensive strategy to implement a multifaceted program of smart solutions. We can do this.

### **Learn More!**

- Kamala Harris, Smart on Crime, Chronicle Books; First edition (October 7, 2009)
- Department of Justice, Smart on Crime, Reforming the Criminal Justice System for the 21st Century
- Democracy Journal, Smart on Crime, Spring, 2013
- Garrick L. Percival, Smart on Crime: The Struggle to Build a Better American Penal System, July 28, 2015
- Freedom Works, Peach State Justice: Successes of Smart on Crime Policies in Georgia, 12/2017
- Abell Foundation, Safe Streets Baltimore, 2017
- Pew Charitable Trusts, 2012 Georgia Public Safety Reform, 7/2012
- Pew Charitable Trusts, Public Safety in Maryland, 7/2015
- Pew Charitable Trusts, Maryland's 2016 Criminal Justice Reform, 11/2017

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*The Maryland Alliance for Justice Reform (MAJR) is a nonpartisan association of over forty community organizations and churches with members in every part of the state, formed to support justice reinvestment. Individual supporters include judges, attorneys, corrections professionals, as well as returning citizens, victims, and service providers.*

*Links in this document can be activated by going to <http://www.ma4jr.org/smart-on-crime-2/>*