



February 25, 2020

To: The Honorable Luke Clippinger and Distinguished Members of the Maryland General Assembly
House Judiciary Committee

From: Quaker Voice of Maryland (QVM), Molly Mitchell, Clerk

Quaker Voice of Maryland, formed in 2019, helps Maryland Quakers have an effective voice in statewide policy decisions on issues of concern to them. Quaker Voice of MD supports HB 812.

State prison recidivism statistics indicate that over 40% of those who leave MD prisons return (recidivate) within 3 years. To help people who have served time in our state prisons live stable, productive lives when they re-enter our communities, providing education while they are in custody is critical.

As noted in a recent Rand Corporation study (2016), "Inmates who participate in any kind of educational program behind bars—from remedial math to vocational auto shop to college-level courses—are up to 43 percent less likely to reoffend and return to prison. They also appear to be far more likely to find a job after their release, and the social stability that comes with it." Every dollar invested in correctional education, RAND concluded, saves nearly five in reincarceration costs over three years."

According to its 2019 Fiscal Impact report, the cost to the Maryland Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services to track the increased incentives of HB 812 would be minimal. However, professionals suggest that the increased incentives could help restore the level of GED participation which substantially has dropped in recent years.

This bill will support public safety by reducing recidivism. For all these reasons, Quaker Voice of Maryland urges the members of the House Judiciary Committee to support HB 812.

Sincerely,

Molly Mitchell, Clerk (Chair)

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