

WANIKA B. FISHER, ESQ.  
Legislative District 47B  
Prince George's County

Judiciary Committee



The Maryland House of Delegates  
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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

March 04, 2020

Honorable Chairman, Luke Clippinger

Vice Chair, Vanessa E. Atterbeary

Members of the Judiciary Committee

**Re:** HB 1213 - Courts - Jury Service - Disqualification

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I am pleased to introduce HB1213, Jury Service Disqualification. HB1213 would alter the circumstances under which a person can be disqualified from jury service. Jury service has long been recognized as a civic duty in our country. The ability for citizens to take part in their governments judicial processes is an important part of our democracy and should be. Individuals that have prior criminal charges, that were greater than a year imprisonment, will no longer be disbarred from being in a jury selection.

As it currently stands, in Maryland law, individuals with pending charges are not able to partake in jury services, even without an official judgement. In our criminal system, we are innocent until proven guilty therefore our ability to serve in a jury should not be barred.

Our State has led on the issue of having everyone be part of our democracy by giving felons their voting rights restored. It is now time to allow all people to serve on our juries. It is critical that we allow all Maryland residents to be part of the jury selection process and fulfill their civic duties in order to have a better reflection of the community. Our current law keeps many residents in our community out of our justice system.

For these reasons, I ask this Committee for a **favorable** report on HB 1213.

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Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Wanika Fisher".

Wanika B. Fisher  
Maryland State Delegate – District 47B