



THE SENATE OF MARYLAND  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

**Testimony of Senator Jill P. Carter  
In Favor of SB0403 - Public Institutions of Higher Education  
– Incarcerated and Formerly Incarcerated Individuals –  
Academic and Employment Opportunities  
Before the Education, Health & Environmental Affairs  
Committee  
on February 25, 2021**

**Mr. Chairman, Madam Vice chair, and Members of the  
Committee:**

**This bill seeks to help formerly incarcerated individuals during the reentry process by creating increased opportunities for them in accessing academic programs and employment at the University System of Maryland (USM).**

**The impetus of this Bill is worth mentioning. Students at the University of Maryland discovered the relationship between incarcerated individuals and themselves - that being the actual chairs they sit in during classes. As you are aware, Maryland Correctional Enterprises supply, among many other things, furniture to USM. The students you are going**

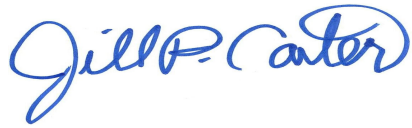
**to hear from decided that the inmates who produced the furniture for their education should have access to the same opportunities they have themselves.**

**This Bill has three major components. First, it would direct the Maryland Higher Education Commission to conduct outreach and information campaigns to incarcerated and formerly incarcerated individuals in order to inform them of the employment and education opportunities available at USM. Second, the commission would establish a preferential track for student applicants to USM who are or were formerly incarcerated. And third, the commission would establish a preferential track for applicants seeking employment at USM that are or were formerly incarcerated.**

**Maryland is a proponent of strengthening reentry programs that allow formerly incarcerated individuals to reintegrate into society upon release, and this is another initiative we can introduce to prioritize our investment in reentry programs. This bill allows for greater access to education and employment, and emphasizes the sharing of information about these opportunities.**

**For these reasons, I urge a favorable report on SB 403 from this committee.**

**Respectfully,**

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jill P. Carter". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J" and a distinct "P" and "C".

**Jill P. Carter**