

Testimony in support of:  
Senate Bill 322:Health – Health and Wellness Standards – Correctional Facilities and Health  
Care Facilities in the State of Maryland

Submitted by:  
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Dear members of the Maryland State Senate,

My name is Edith Lopez Estrada and I live in Baltimore, Maryland. I am a data analyst for HHS and am an active member in my community doing food sovereignty work in the city. I am writing to you because I know the importance of a plant-based diet.

Many of our communities have spoken up about the types of food that they are served in prisons, and the lack of access to fresh, plant-based foods. There have been numerous studies outlining the health outcomes of a plant-based diet, and public health benefits of consuming a plant-based diet. The *Journal of the American Heart Association* published [a review](#) co-authored by [Kim Williams Sr., MD](#) that specifically looked at the underlying health disparities that contribute to heart disease in the United States. The review summarizes research behind diet, one of the top modifiable risk factors for heart disease, and the disproportionate effects of racial, economic, and social disparities on diet quality.

I urge you to support Senate Bill 322 so that people in prisons and hospitals have the option to choose a plant-based meal, for the sake of their health.

Thank you for your consideration.

Edith Lopez Estrada