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THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

**Testimony of Senator Jill P. Carter
In Favor of SB0397 - Correctional Services - Diminution Credits -
Education
Before the Judicial Proceedings Committee
on February 10, 2021**

Mr. Chairman, Mr. Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee:

Senate Bill 397 seeks to address the problems of mass incarceration and recidivism while reducing the overall cost to the taxpayer of incarceration.

This bill will authorize diminution credits to reduce the term of confinement of an inmate who earns certain educational certificates, diplomas, or degrees. Specifically, Senate Bill 397 allows up to 90 days reduction of a sentence for at least 600 hours of related coursework, an intermediate high school academic certificate, or a high school diploma.

According to the Vera Institute of Justice, Maryland spends an estimated \$44,601 per prisoner annually. A recent Rand Corporation study shows that every one dollar spent on correctional education saves as much as five dollars on incarceration and other costs to the community due to recidivism. As highlighted in the fiscal note, this bill would help reduce the burden on taxpayers while encouraging inmates to seek educational opportunities and obtain meaningful employment upon release. In addition, passage of this legislation would place Maryland alongside 13 other states that offer diminution credits to inmates for educational achievement.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge a favorable report on SB0397.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jill P. Carter". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, stylized "J" at the beginning.

Jill P. Carter