



EDUCATION, HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

Senate Bill 800

Inmate Training and Job Act of 2021

March 5, 2021

Favorable

Chair Pinsky, Vice Chair Kagan and committee members, thank you for the opportunity to comment on Senate Bill 800. We would like to thank Senator Patterson for sponsoring this legislation. We support Senate Bill 800, which will establish an inmate training and job pilot program at institutions of postsecondary education. This legislation is critical in providing educational and vocational training opportunities for inmates in order to break the cycle of recidivism. Bowie State University already participates in the Maryland Department of Corrections 'Second Chance Pell Grant' program, which provides certificate programs and instruction to individuals in the Jessup Correctional Facility.

Senate Bill 800 will enable Bowie State University to leverage the existing pipeline of interested participants who are committed to building their education attainment credits and fostering deeper life skills. Passage of Senate Bill 800, will allow Bowie State University to leverage two key components of the university, while addressing the educational and job reorientation needs of formerly incarcerated individuals. They are the Bowie State University Entrepreneurship Academy and the Bowie Business Innovation Center (Bowie BIC), the first business accelerator located at a Maryland historically black college or university (HBCU). The Entrepreneurship Academy offers programs and activities to give students the tools to launch their own businesses and think innovatively in the new economy.

The university's partnership with the Maryland Department of Corrections and Maryland Higher Education Commission is primed to ensure the long-term viability of the Senate Bill 800 to develop a robust candidate pool of individuals committed to taking their rightful place as productive members of our society. The inclusion of Bowie State University as a potential institution of higher education in this pilot will strengthen new entrepreneur business development and job creation in the State of Maryland. Bowie State University urges a favorable report for Senate Bill 800.

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