

**Bill No: HB 131**

Title: **Correctional Services – Step–Down Programs – Cause of Action**

Committee: Judiciary

Hearing Date: January 27, 2021

**Position: SUPPORT**

Please support [HB 131](#) that mandates the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services to provide transitional services to incarcerated people in six months prior to their release. The bill requires the DPSCS to introduce a “step down” program to those incarcerated in restrictive housing as well as involving a coordinated multidisciplinary treatment team approach.

I am attaching an interview I did with Rick Raemisch, the Executive Director of the Colorado Department of Corrections, that is directly relevant to this subject. Please review it. It is critical that Maryland, like Colorado, view this as a public safety issue. Segregated housing/solitary confinement can and does change the brain and negatively affects the likelihood that a prisoner will be able to transition back to society. Preparing prisoners for the transition saves the public money as well as helping individuals, families, and communities be healthy and productive.

Over the last five years, the Department releases anywhere from 250 to 300 people directly to the community from restrictive housing without any form of step-down transition. This practice poses a threat to public safety and undermines the chances of incarcerated people to reenter the community successfully.

Sincerely,

Susannah Rose