



**Bill No: HB0089**

Title: Correctional Services - Diminution Credits - Education

Committee: Judiciary/Judicial Proceedings

Hearing Date: January 18, 2021

**Position: SUPPORT**

From Prison Cells to PhD is a national non-profit based in Maryland whose mission is to help incarcerated and formerly incarcerated individuals to excel beyond what society and life circumstances have set to be the norm. Our organization provides mentoring and educational counseling to individuals returning from incarceration so that they may position themselves to start building thriving careers. Over the past several years we have conducted our program in several institutions in Maryland. Currently we operate in more 2 dozen states across the country. Annually, over 400 individuals apply and just over 100 are selected to become scholars in our program. What should be noted too, is that of the scholars who complete the P2P program, we have a 97.5% post-secondary education matriculation rate and our systems involved scholars boast of maintaining a 3.75 GPA.

Every year, thousands of Marylanders leave our state and local correctional facilities and return to our communities without any educational or vocational skills to support their successful reentry upon release. Without these skills, the likelihood of finding gainful employment, especially with a criminal record, is nearly impossible.

Currently, the state of Maryland provides up to 30 diminution credits to certain individuals who simply participate in educational programs; but, often, many are released without completing the program and securing any credential.

We know that education and employment are key factors in the successful reentry of formerly incarcerated persons. From Prison Cells to PhD supports this legislation which will provide increased diminution credits – an additional 60-day reduction - to incarcerated persons who successfully complete an educational or vocational program.

We therefore urge a favorable report.

Respectfully submitted,  
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