

KATHLEEN M. DUMAIS  
*Legislative District 15*  
Montgomery County

*Vice Chair*  
Economic Matters Committee

*Chair*  
Property and Casualty Insurance  
Subcommittee

*House Chair*  
Joint Committee on Legislative Ethics



The Maryland House of Delegates  
6 Bladen Street, Room 231  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
410-841-3052 · 301-858-3052  
800-492-7122 Ext. 3052  
Fax 410-841-3219 · 301-858-3219  
Kathleen.Dumais@house.state.md.us

## *The Maryland House of Delegates*

ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

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### **Testimony in Support of House Bill 426 – Correctional Services – Geriatric Parole**

Good afternoon Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you on behalf of **House Bill 426 – Correctional Services – Geriatric Parole**.

This bill would establish a method for determining, based upon development of a dynamic risk assessment tool, if an inmate who is at least 60 years old is suitable for parole. Before applying the assessment, the inmate must be eligible for parole and not registered – or be eligible for registration – as a sex offender. The risk assessment would be designed to analyze the likelihood of future criminal activity by the inmate and also assess the need for conditions for release. Eligible individuals must be assessed annually and, within six months of the assessment, given a hearing to determine parole suitability. Every six months the Parole Commission must report to the Justice Reinvestment Oversight Board the outcomes of geriatric parole considerations.

In weighing suitability for parole, the inmate's age and the impact of his or her age on likelihood of reoffending; the results of the most recent risk assessment; and the results of any relevant mental health evaluation must be considered by the Parole Commission. These considerations are in addition to the factors laid out in Section 7-305 of the Correctional Services Article.

Justice reinvestment and its goals of realizing cost savings and reallocating those savings inform this bill. Indeed, House Bill 426 stipulates that any savings realized by the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services be used by the Department for further development and implementation of the dynamic risk assessment. Savings shall also be used for prerelease and reentry case management and resources for inmates who are released as a result of this legislation.

House Bill 426 would enhance our justice reinvestment and criminal justice reform tool box. I respectfully request a favorable report.