



February 21, 2022

The Honorable WILLIAM C. (WILL) SMITH, JR., Chair  
Judicial Proceedings Committee  
Miller Senate Office Building, 2 East Wing  
11 Bladen St., Annapolis, MD 21401

Re: SB 602: Baltimore City – District Court – Jobs Court Pilot Program

*Chairman Smith, Vice Chair Waldstriecker and members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee:*

My name is Lisa Rusyniak, President and CEO of Goodwill Industries of the Chesapeake. Goodwill Industries of the Chesapeake is a strong supporter of Senate Bill 602.

SB 602 establishes the Jobs Court Pilot Program in the Baltimore City District Court. The purpose of the pilot program is to reduce recidivism by offering defendants an opportunity to participate in full-time job training and job placement programs as a condition of probation, an alternative to incarceration, or a condition of pretrial release.

As an organization that provides workforce development training and employs returning citizens, Goodwill knows first-hand how important job training, case management, employment and retention services are in the efforts to reduce recidivism. Stable employment greatly improves the lives of returning citizens, their families, and the communities in which they live.

Goodwill's SEETTS program (Supporting Ex-Offenders in Employment, Training and Transitional Services) has been in operation for 20 years and has had success both within Maryland correctional facilities and upon release. SEETTS, a Maryland state funded program, provides in-reach vocational evaluation and job readiness training services to inmates, those recently released and to anyone with a criminal record. A graduate of our SEETTS Program is employed as a District Manager within our Retail Division, serving as a source of leadership and direction to many employees throughout our organization. This is one of many examples within Goodwill that demonstrates the opportunities available to returning citizens when offered employment resources and support.

SB 602 would allow for programs to provide an alternative to incarceration and provide employment stability to individuals at risk of entering the prison system. We urge a favorable report on SB 602.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lisa Rusyniak". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Lisa Rusyniak  
President and CEO