



TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB775
Courts – Payment for Jury Service

To: Chairman William C. Smith, Jr., Vice Chairman Jeff Waldstreicher and Members of the House Ways and Means Committee

From: Monica Cooper Maryland Justice Project, Founder

Date: 3/03/2022

Dear Chairman and members of the committee

The Maryland Justice Project would like to ask for your support on **SB775 Payment for Jury Service**. While our organization work with Women and Girls Incarcerated and Formerly Incarcerated we often find ourselves dealing with families who are going through court proceedings. One thing we have found is the extreme inequity in the selection of jurors as it relates to retuning citizens and citizens of color. Many folks have been excluded from this act of citizenship. Besides those things I have mentioned our court system needs a complete overhaul, which includes providing Maryland citizens a stipend that reflects Maryland's changing economy. Unfortunately, goods, merchandise, and services have all seen drastic price increases. As Maryland citizens show up to perform their civic duty they should at least be able to afford to have lunch with the funds provided them. By rendering a favorable vote on this bill you will be sending a positive message to all Marylanders, and that message is **"we see you"**,

“we know you are struggling financially” and “we want to acknowledge that by increasing payment for jury service”

Thank you,

*Monica Cooper, Founder and Executive Director
Maryland Justice Project*