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**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SENATE BILL 704:**

**Conditions of Pretrial Release – Home Detention Monitoring – Alterations and Extension**

**TO:** Hon. William C. Smith, and Members of the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee

**FROM:** Ulonda Gregg

**DATE:** March 9, 2022

My name is Ulonda Gregg and I support(s) Senate Bill 704 as a means to ensure that indigent persons awaiting trial are not pushed further into debt or incarcerated while participating in private home detention programs throughout the state.

I am currently on pretrial for a case that has been delayed for quite some time. I live in Baltimore City where electronic monitoring via home detention is not covered by the state or local jurisdiction. ASAP home detention has charged me \$500 per month since October of last year and I have only managed to pay it by leaning on my aging father and other relatives who are in the same financial straits that I am in. Last year, when I was placed on pretrial, I spent the majority of my remaining funding on retaining a lawyer to represent my case and when I had informed him of my financial situation, he informed me of the court's new pretrial payment program that must have just gone into effect in October. After seeing a flyer about it from JOTF, my lawyer gave me Mr. Dews' number and we navigated the process together.

It was rather efficient. Mr. Dews sent me the public defender qualification paperwork, I signed it, and then we went to the Wabash Court. There, we handed the documents into the commissioner's office and were told to wait for a public defender approval letter. Once I received it in the mail, we took a picture of it and sent it to ASAP Home Detention. Once they sent back confirmation, I no longer had to worry about that hideous \$500 expense. The program is good *and* it works for people from lower-income communities. PLEASE do not let this program die for systemic, logistical or political reasons. The Maryland Judiciary has really struck gold with this program and I am truly grateful to the bill sponsors for fighting to extend it. I urge a favorable report on SB704.