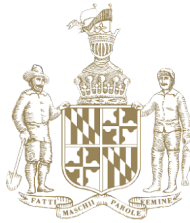


STEPHANIE SMITH
Legislative District 45
Baltimore City

Appropriations Committee

House Chair
Baltimore City Delegation



The Maryland House of Delegates
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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

**HB1011: Conditions of Pretrial Release – Home Detention Monitoring –
Alterations and Extension**

Bill Hearing: February 22, 2022, 1:00pm, Judiciary Committee

Chairman Luke Clippinger, Vice Chair David Moon, and members of the committee,

Across the state of Maryland, over half a million of our citizens live below the poverty line. As we know, the cycle of poverty weaves a complicated web of vulnerability, leaving many of our constituents in disadvantaged positions as they struggle to make ends meet and manage an endless accumulation of debt.

Among this highly vulnerable group, we find a considerable number of individuals grappling with the monthly costs of participating in private home detention programs. Often, these individuals are still awaiting trial, meaning that they have not been convicted of any crime. In Baltimore alone, these individuals are charged \$300-\$550 per month in fees for these programs regardless of their financial situation. To make matters worse, their position in the criminal justice system makes it nearly impossible to find adequate employment even to fulfill basic needs for themselves and their families, much less to pay extraneous fees for crimes they may not have committed. Failure to pay these fees can result in incarceration as well as additional debt, relentlessly preventing them from achieving stability.

In recent years, these low-to-no-income citizens have been protected by our legislature's decision to establish a state-funded program which allows monthly home detention bills to be paid by the

court while they await trial. As of June 30th, 2022, they will no longer be afforded this protection.

HB1011 intends to extend this program to June 30th, 2025. Covering these fees for the years to come will massively contribute to the success of vulnerable Marylanders, and ultimately result in reduced recidivism across the state. It is our duty as legislators to ensure that **all** of our constituents have the best possible path toward economic growth and stability.

I urge you to vote favorably on HB1011.

Sincerely,

Delegate Stephanie M. Smith