



PREPARE
PREpare for PARole and REentry

February 17, 2023

Re: Testimony in Support of HB0416
Resources and Education for All Prisoners Act

Dear Members of the Judiciary Committee:

I am a registered voter and returning citizen residing in District #41. I served over four decades for crimes I committed as a fifteen year old. I believe I deserved to be imprisoned and continue to spend every day atoning for my transgressions by working to improve myself and helping others. As a parole advocate for PREPARE, a non-profit providing parole and reentry services for Marylanders, I support the REAP Act.

Educational opportunities were among the things which helped me reform, transition to the greater community, and become a productive, law abiding citizen. In fact, I benefited from the PELL Grant during an era when local colleges and universities had extension programs throughout Md's prison system. I earned an A.A. Degree in Business Administration from, then, the Community College of Baltimore in 1988. Then, I transferred to Morgan State University's program where I accumulated 112 credits towards a B.S. Degree in Business Management.

Unfortunately, before I could complete my degree, the PELL grants were discontinued for prisoners. Needless to say, the federal restriction ended higher education extension programs. I was directly impacted in another way. I have remained an undergraduate for over twenty-nine years. I did not have an opportunity to complete my degree while in the prison system. Furthermore, since so much time has lapsed, I am having difficulty utilizing those credits to complete my degree.

There is a need for DPSCS to establish tracking systems related to prison educational programs and assist incarcerated people in accessing educational grants and establishing goals relating to educational programs. Thus, I ask this Committee to vote favorably for HB0416.

Truly yours,

Gordon R. Pack, Jr.
gordon@prepare-parole.org
gordonrpack@gmail.com
Cell# 410-456-7034

PREPARE
PO Box 16274, Baltimore, MD 21210



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