



TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 546
Criminal Procedure – Medical Emergency – Immunity

March 8, 2023

Senator William C. Smith, Jr.
2 East
Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Testimony of Marian House in Support of SB546

**Dear Chair Smith, Vice-Chair Waldstreicher,
and members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee,**

Marian House is a holistic, healing community for women and their children who are in need of housing and support services. Marian House provides comprehensive support services to assist women with experiences of trauma, including poverty, substance abuse, and incarceration. **I write to urge you to support Senate Bill 546 Criminal Procedure – Medical Emergency – Immunity.**

Over forty years ago, Marian House was opened to provide reentry supports for women leaving incarceration as Sisters and laywomen recognized that lack of support contributed to recidivism rates. Today, we have also expanded to serve women with histories of trauma including homelessness, incarceration, neglect, substance abuse and mental health needs. Since our opening, we have assisted women who have been victims of crime in reinventing and rebuilding themselves through services such as: counseling, substance abuse treatment, job training and providing both long and short-term housing. All the women we have served have overcome obstacles on their journeys to become contributing members of society in the Baltimore area.

The chance of surviving an overdose, like that of surviving a heart attack, greatly depends on how fast one receives medical assistance. Witnesses to an overdose, however, often hesitate to seek help or simply do not call for assistance. Research confirms the most common reason people cite for not calling 911 is fear of police involvement. Reducing barriers to calling 911 has the potential to save victims of overdose from severe injury and death. Initial results from an evaluation of Washington State's Good Samaritan law, adopted in 2010, found that 88% of people who use opioids said they would be more likely, and less afraid, to call 911 in the event of a future overdose after learning about the law. **SB 546 will help save lives, therefore, we urge your FAVORABLE SUPPORT.**

Thank you for your support,

Katie Allston, LCSW-C
President and C.E.O.