

February 13, 2023

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing in full support of SB0427. As the President and CEO of the Washington County Community Action Council, it is my responsibility to ensure our agency is serving the residents of Washington County that are striving for self-sufficiency. We serve over 10,000 clients each year with a variety of programs including energy assistance, eviction prevention, food pantry and transportation to mention a few. We are 95% grant funded from federal, state and local governments. All of these grants have very specific requirements to assist only Washington County residents. We have significantly more requests for assistance than we have the funding to provide.

Inmates that are released into our community from other counties in Maryland where they committed the crime attempt to get services from CAC. They are denied until they can meet the grant requirements. Frequently these newly released inmates tell staff they have no plan and need help with housing and food, however have no employment or plan for self-sufficiency, which conflicts with our mission. We give our clients a hand up and not a hand out. As a result, too frequently these former inmates regress to committing crimes in our community.

CAC has limited resources that we use to help productive low-income members of our community when they experience a life event such as a medical bill, loss of a job or other unanticipated event that affects their family budget. We cannot and will not provide services to inmates as they are released into our county if they do not meet the minimum qualifications for the grants.

It is critical for our community that SB0427 is passed. It is not the responsibility of Washington County nonprofits to assist inmates who were not originally residents of Washington County.

Respectfully submitted,



President/CEO