



BRANDON M. SCOTT
MAYOR

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HB 1123

March 9, 2023

TO: Members of the House Appropriations Committee

FROM: Nina Themelis, Interim Director of Mayor's Office of Government Relations

RE: House Bill 1123 – Correctional Services – Maryland Correctional Enterprises – Minimum Wage and Inmate Financial Accounts

POSITION: Support

Chair Barnes, Vice Chair Chang, and Members of the Committee, please be advised that the Baltimore City Administration (BCA) **supports** House Bill (HB) 1123.

HB 1123 ensures that incarcerated workers in Maryland Correctional facilities are paid the state minimum wage for their labor. It also provides for inmates' use of funds in financial accounts, and requires classes for inmates on financial literacy along with job readiness training and job placement assistance. This bill is an important step in improving conditions for incarcerated individuals by guaranteeing fair wages. In advancing job and educational opportunities in prisons, it will help to prepare returning citizens to successfully reenter their communities and reduce recidivism.

Providing a reasonable wage and life skills training is a key component for an incarcerated person's rehabilitation. Increasing wages for incarcerated workers will not only benefit the overall economy but also the morale of the incarcerated population. It will provide independence and foster a sense of responsibility. Moreover, by requiring financial literacy, job readiness and job placement assistance, this legislation will increase the likelihood of successful reintegration into society upon release.

For these reasons, the BCA respectfully requests a **favorable** report on HB 1123.