



PREPARE
PREpare for PARole and REentry

Anne Bocchini Kirsch
Director of Advocacy, PREPARE
anne@prepare-parole.org
(410) 994-6136

SB0620 - Resources and Education for All Prisons (REAP) Act - Support

The REAP Act adds data tracking and reporting infrastructure to post-secondary education. With the current amendments, which place it properly in the Correctional Services Article (as opposed to Labor and Employment), it creates a permanent link between the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services (DPSCS), which manages the administration of post-secondary programs, and the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC), which collects the Pell Grant data for all college programs in the state. This is a powerful collaboration because it will allow DPSCS to utilize the higher education data in case management and programming decisions and produce a report and dashboard to allow ongoing program analysis. The ground level data sharing infrastructure created by the REAP act in the first year after reinstatement of correctional Pell Grants will be the foundation for growth and improvement of higher education programs in Maryland prisons for years to come.

The Department of Labor (DLR) currently maintains data for GED and vocational programming and produces a yearly Correctional Education Council (CEC) report. This is a legislated system that ensures data is available and someone is accountable for answering questions. Because the Department of Labor does not manage the postsecondary correctional education programs, they do not have data on nor do they report on these programs. In fact, the 2021 FASFA Simplification Act requires this to be managed by DPSCS - a new mandate provided with the new financial opportunity of Pell Grants in a correctional setting. But a new opportunity requires new infrastructure, and that is where the REAP Act comes in.

The REAP act creates a state level reporting requirement for correctional postsecondary education, thereby securing the necessary resources and partnerships to ensure reporting and analysis is conducted and Maryland makes good use of the Pell opportunity and offers the most relevant case management to promote long term success in returning citizens.

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PO Box 9738 Towson, MD 21284