



Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services

Office of Government & Legislative Affairs

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BILL: House Bill 1151

POSITION: Letter of Information

EXPLANATION: House Bill 1151 will remove Maryland Correctional Enterprises as a Preferred Provider for the State.

COMMENTS:

- The Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services Division of Correction operates 13 State correctional facilities housing offenders sentenced to periods of incarceration for 18 months and longer. The Department also oversees five facilities located in Baltimore City that houses pretrial detainees and incarcerated individuals sentenced to incarceration for periods of 18 months and less.
- Maryland Correctional Enterprises (MCE) provides structured training activities for incarcerated individuals in order to improve employability upon release, to enhance safety and security by reducing prison idleness, to produce quality goods and services, while remaining a financially self-supporting State agency. MCE is a 100% self-funded program. Any sustainable income is used to improve the programs.
- MCE provides training and reentry services through the operation of 26 business units in 11 State correctional facilities. In FY23, MCE incarcerated individuals received 1,428 certificates, increasing future employability significantly for this population.
- In addition to the skills training and vocational training, 770 incarcerated individuals earned certificates through the Department of Labor and MCE's Job Skills Training partnership.
- Through the MCE CARES program, not only is job training offered, but skills development, and re-entry services including job placement and financial literacy programming. This provides those individuals being released a greater opportunity of gaining employment in society, which reduces the likelihood of recidivism.

- MCE plays a significant and valuable role in reentry by providing meaningful programming and services to incarcerated individuals so they will be successful within the community. More importantly, MCE programs provide positivity, improves behavior, skills, mental health, and social functioning for incarcerated individuals.
- The skills and vocational training also provides a sense of accomplishment and the incarcerated individuals look forward to using the skills they learned through MCE in the community. In fact, 20% of the MCE workforce are formerly incarcerated individuals.

CONCLUSION: For these reasons, the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services respectfully requests the Committee consider this information as it deliberates House Bill 1151.