



**TESTIMONY FOR SB0389
CRIMINAL PROCEDURE – INCARCERATED SENIORS – MOTION TO REDUCE THE
DURATION OF A SENTENCE**

Bill Sponsor: Senator West

Committee: Judicial Proceedings

Organization Submitting: Maryland Legislative Coalition

Person Submitting: Cecilia Plante, co-chair

Position: FAVORABLE

I am submitting this testimony in favor of SB0389 on behalf of the Maryland Legislative Coalition. The Maryland Legislative Coalition is an association of activists - individuals and grassroots groups in every district in the state. We are unpaid citizen lobbyists, and our Coalition supports well over 30,000 members.

The United States has the highest incarceration rate in the world. We have historically put many people in jail for possessing small amounts of marijuana (which is now being legalized) and for other small crimes. Over time, our incarcerated population has aged. There are currently over 1,000 individuals who are over 60 years old who are incarcerated in Maryland.

This bill, if enacted, would allow anyone who is over 60 years old who has served at least 20 years of their sentence to request a hearing to reduce their sentence. But lest we think that we would be allowing murderers out on the streets, this bill would require that notice of the hearing would be given to the victim or victim's representative, and the court would be required to approve the request for a reduced sentence only if the individual is not a danger to the public, or if the interests of justice would be better served with a reduced sentence.

Our members believe that we have way too many people whose lives have been on hold for committing offenses that they have long since paid for.

We support this bill and recommend a **FAVORABLE** report in committee