



TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 0134:

Office of the Attorney General – Correctional Ombudsman Unit

****FAVORABLE****

TO: Senator William C. Smith, Chair, Senator Jeff Waldstreicher, Vice Chair and the members of the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee

FROM: Rev. Linda K. Boyd, Co-Chair, Maryland Episcopal Public Policy Network, Diocese of Maryland

DATE: February 7, 2024

This bill establishes a Correctional Ombudsman Unit in the Office of the Attorney General that would conduct investigations, reviews and assessments of administrative acts taken by the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Service or with regard to individuals confined by the Department. The Maryland State prison system has been without serious oversight for many years. Problems in that Department have surfaced recently that demonstrate significant oversight is needed. Public trust in law enforcement is better served if serious incidents involving our correctional system are subject to not just outside scrutiny but also are left to outside prosecutors to decide whether criminal charges should follow. Everyone who is within the Department and those individuals affected by the Department's action, and most important, the community, would be better served if such potential bias were eliminated in a serious investigation. Such objectivity would result in increased faith in the legal system by the average citizen.

We respectfully request a favorable report.



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Public Policy
Network