

February 7, 2024 @ 1pm (Senate Hearing)

Maryland General Assembly
Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee
2 East
Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: SB 0132 – Correctional Services – Medical Parole - Life Imprisonment – SUPPORT

Please accept my written testimony in support of the Senate Bill 0132. In 2021, the Maryland General Assembly passed legislation to remove the Governor from the parole process for those serving life sentences. That was a huge step forward for Maryland in the area of criminal justice reform. It adds one lever of many that are needed to undo years of a non-functioning system. The systems have contributed to Maryland's staggering incarceration record especially among those of persons of color. This bill would address an unintended oversight that was missed in the original legislation. Unfortunately, it left out the most vulnerable among the lifer's population those in need of medical parole. Passing this bill will eliminate the inconsistency in the law and provide the same avenue of parole approval for all lifers. Medical parole for lifers is important whereas they are also in need of mercy and an acknowledgement that true redemption is possible which is the fundamental principle the parole system was established upon. I hope that you will unequivocally support this bill and move it forward for a vote.

Respectfully,

Martina Hazelton

Martina Hazelton
Co-Founder & Executive Director
Family Support Network (FSN)
3937 ½ Minnesota Avenue, NE
PO Box 64093
Washington, DC 20029
Website: thefamilysupportnetwork.org

