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The Honorable William C. Smith, Jr.
Chair, Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee
11 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: SUPPORT of SB1098 – Correctional Services - Diminution Credits - Sexual Offenses (Pava Marie LaPere Act)

Chair Smith, Vice-Chair Waldstreicher, and all members of the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee, thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony to you in favor of Senate Bill 1098, ***The Pava Marie LaPere Act***. I also want to thank States' Attorneys Ivan Bates and Aisha Braveboy for their unwavering support.

Good afternoon.

I am the saddened but proud Father of Pava Marie LaPere, Jason Dean Billingsley's latest victim.

Baltimore Mayor Brandon Scott stated emphatically on September 26th, that, "There is no way in ***Hell*** that he should have been on the street"! Yet, He had already violated his terms of parole, and was still "on the street".

Governor Moore has stated emphatically on several occasions, "The System Failed Pava!"

And I state, again, emphatically, that no other victims should fall prey to repeat violent sexual convicts such as this defendant. We cannot allow the system that failed Pava to continue.

While she is physically gone from this world, Pava's vision and dreams will live on because she already has an impactful legacy in her adopted city of Baltimore and State of Maryland.

EcoMap Technologies employs 30 people in Baltimore, just one of the companies she started, with lots of help, along with TCO Labs, Inov8MD and The Hatchery, as a student, in her dorm room, at Johns Hopkins.

It's easy to see why Pava was selected as a member of the prestigious Forbes 30-Under-30 class of 2023.

This loss ***is*** tragic ***and*** horrific, and I firmly believe that it could have been avoided.

Let SB1098, **The Pava Marie LaPere Act**, be a model for the entire country, on how to represent and defend the innocent from previously-convicted, repeat violent sexual offenders.

Good, thoughtful, loving people like those in this room today from *both* sides of the political spectrum, can do amazing things when working together for the common good.

This bill does not eliminate *all* diminution credits. Only for those convicted of the most heinous sexual crimes in the First Degree, like Jason Billingsley, after he served only 7 years of a much longer sentence.

So today I am very hopeful because I have seen beauty and loving support from the City of Baltimore, The State of Maryland and the broader tech communities that embraced Pava. They have shown my family and I, as well as the community at large, the love required to help carry all of us through this shattering loss.

Because a mother should not have to nurse her daughter to health after a horrific act of repeat sexual violence.

And because a sibling should never lose his best friend, and most trusted confidant, while they are both in their 20s.

And, a father should kiss his daughter goodnight, and not try to cry himself to sleep, through avoidable grief.

We *know* this because we have *lived* this, and we never want any other family to have to identify their daughter's body, almost un-recognizable, again. The pain and complete emptiness is much too much for a father to withstand.

And it can - and should - be set in stone that *no other father* has to experience what I have, and the ensuing loss and emptiness that follows.

Let us work together as a community, as a Legislature and as a judicial system, to ensure that Pava Marie LaPere is the *Very Last Victim* of a convicted, repeat sexual offender.

Thank you for your time, and your support for this most-important legislation.

I remain the proud, grateful and hopeful father of Pava Marie LaPere, and her only sibling, Nico.

I respectfully ask for a favorable vote on SB1098, and thank you for your time.

Frank A. LaPere