

February 27, 2024

The Honorable William C. Smith Jr.,  
Chairman, Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee  
Miller Senate Office Building  
11 Bladen Street  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: Support of SB1098 – Correctional Services – Diminution Credits – Sexual Offenses

Dear Chairman Smith and Members of the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee,

I am writing to express my support for SB1098 Correctional Services - Diminution Credits (Pava Marie LaPere Act). This legislation is a commonsense bill that looks to close the loophole allowing dangerous predators to return to society and often times reoffend. I believe this reform is essential to ensuring justice for victims, preventing further harm, and protecting public safety.

Pava Marie LaPere was a guiding light in my life. I met her first as my employer, and she quickly became my best friend and mentor. She brought me to Baltimore to work at her company. A transplant herself, she loved this city with such a passion I didn't realize she wasn't from Baltimore until 6-months into knowing her. She was the kind of person that threw her whole self into anything she did. She gave Baltimore all her brains and all her heart and was constantly trying to show others how great of a city we have. She convinced me quickly that Baltimore was exceptional, and I became a champion for this city just like her.

Tragically, both Baltimore and I had her light taken from us far too soon. More sadly, still, her death was avoidable. Pava was always great at finding flaws in systems. And today, we can correct the flaw highlighted by her death. We have an opportunity to make Baltimore safer for everyone currently here and everyone who is looking to make Baltimore their new home.

I would be remiss if I didn't share that Pava's death did take away a layer of security for me. Pava and I would often see shows at the Hippodrome or a concert at the BSO. Now, when I am planning those activities, I debate with myself if I should walk there or not. I text my friends when I get to my car and lock the doors as soon as I get in. I wonder if these feelings will diminish over time. This bill has given me hope. It provides a concrete data point on where the system can be fixed. We must pass this bill so that all current and future citizens of Baltimore and I can feel safe in this city that Pava fell in love with.

I wholeheartedly support this piece of legislation and ask that you consider doing the same as my elected representative. I thank you for your consideration as members of the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee, and I wanted to celebrate the hardworking and dedicated sponsors of this legislation, Delegate Elizabeth Embry and Senator Will Smith, whose decision to sponsor such legislation has restored my faith in the legislative process. I also want to thank State Attorney Bates for bringing this bill to the Delegate/Senator for consideration. And I want to

thank the distinguished members of this Committee, such as yourself, for considering the advancement of Senate Bill 1098 in this legislative session to ensure no other family or friends must endure such a loss based on this legal loophole.

Sincerely,

Eden Ryan