

**Testimony before the House Judiciary in Support of HB 724,
The Maryland Second Look Act, Feb. 13, 2024**

Please support HB 724. My name is Edward Sabin. I am a retired state employee. I have been a volunteer at Jessup Correctional Institution (JCI) on and off for over 25 years. In doing so I've met a number of men serving long sentences who rehabilitated themselves. They are facilitators in the Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP) a volunteer led program in which I also serve as a facilitator.

AVP workshops are small group experiences which improve communication skills, build a sense of community, and combat the macho ethic so common in prison. Incarcerated people who participate in several workshops can become facilitators and lead workshops themselves, a marketable job skill. Based on sound group dynamics principles, AVP workshops stress experiential learning rather than lectures and include both fun and serious exercises. Workshops often produce a feeling that "we're all in this together." There's a waiting list of incarcerated men for these 18 hour long workshops at JCI.

AVP is practiced in 33 states and 45 countries both inside prisons and in the outside community. Prison administrators generally support AVP because it tends to promote a positive atmosphere and safety in the prison. AVP produces mature and skilled leaders who are needed in the prison but more importantly in the outside world. These men and women can serve as models for young people who need direction in their lives. For this reason, I heartily **support HB 724** to provide these leaders the opportunity to prove their rehabilitation and show leadership in the community. For more information go to www.avpusa.org.

Thank you for your service to the people of Maryland,

Edward Sabin
1639 Lakewood Road
Pasadena, MD 21122
410-255-7362
edsabin1@gmail.com