



## Maryland State's Attorneys' Association

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**DATE:**                   **March 7, 2024**

**BILL NUMBER:**   **HB 61**

**POSITION:**           **Favorable**

The Maryland State's Attorneys' Association (MSAA) supports House Bill 61 and urges this Committee to issue a favorable report.

HB 61 establishes a program within the Division of Correction to provide formerly incarcerated individuals and individuals on probation with a diverse array of services, ranging from assistance obtaining identification documents and information regarding healthcare to mental health and substance abuse counseling. Reentry services are an investment in public safety – research has consistently demonstrated that individuals returning to their communities from incarceration are less likely to reoffend when they are afforded meaningful opportunities. *See, e.g., Philip Cook et al., An Experimental Evaluation of a Comprehensive Employment-Oriented Prisoner Re-entry Program, 31 JOURNAL OF QUANTITATIVE CRIMINOLOGY 355 (2014).* The Re-Entry Support Facility envisioned by this bill would serve as a navigator to help returning citizens overcome the barriers, like difficulty obtaining housing and employment, they face upon their release.

By breaking the cycle of recidivism, reentry programs like the one created in HB 61 directly contribute to public safety by preventing crime, ensuring safer communities and happier families. The cost of this program, and of reentry programs generally, is justified by the exponential benefits that result – these programs pay for themselves when returning citizens are able to successfully reintegrate into society and contribute to their communities. MSAA urges this Committee to issue a favorable report on HB 61.