



HB 1144
Corrections Segregated Housing - Limitations

MCAA Position: **OPPOSE**

TO: Judiciary Committee

DATE: March 5, 2024

FROM: Ryan Ross, President
Lamonte Cooke, Legislative Committee
Mary Ann Thompson, Legislative Committee

The Maryland Correctional Administrator's Association (MCAA), an organization comprised of our statewide jail wardens and administrators for promoting and improving best correctional practices, appreciates the opportunity to provide information regarding House Bill 1144.

Local Detention Centers in the State of Maryland operate according to the Maryland Commission on Correctional Standards (MCCS), codified in Title 12 Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services, Subtitle 14 Commission on Correctional Standards, which includes restrictive housing.

Restrictive housing has long been recognized as a legitimate measure to ensure correctional institutions' orderly operation and safety. Correctional managers' primary duty and responsibility is to provide for the protection and welfare of incarcerated individuals and employees. The use of restrictive housing is essential to accomplishing that. If this bill were to become law, it would limit correctional managers' decision-making ability and cause them to be deliberately indifferent to certain risk factors.

While most of the bill focuses on the State prison system, the bill language sets the local detention centers up for failure to comply with this bill as written:

- Due to facility design, allowing all incarcerated individuals out-of-cell equitably for seven (7) hours per day during non-lockdown hours is not possible.
- There is no allowance for those who, by healthcare and behavioral health professionals, are on medical and mental health holds or maladjusted behavior individuals.
- Residential rehabilitation units would require additional housing units and requisite personnel.
- Some of the data is not currently tracked and would require hiring personnel to gather and report the data to the General Assembly, some of which is already submitted to the Governor's Office on Crime Prevention and Policy by law.

The Maryland Correctional Administrators Association strongly opposes this bill and respectfully requests this committee for an unfavorable report on House Bill 1144.