



MSBA Main Office
520 West Fayette Street
Baltimore, MD 21201
410-685-7878 | msba.org

Annapolis Office
200 Duke of Gloucester Street
Annapolis, MD 21401
410-269-6464 | msba.org

To: Members of the House Judiciary Committee
From: Doyle Niemann, Chair, Legislative Committee, Criminal Law and Practice Section,
Maryland State Bar Association
Subject: **HB37** - Reentry Services for Women - Commission and Pilot Program - Establishment
Date: March 6, 2024
Position: **Support**

The Legislative Committee of the Criminal Law & Practice Section of the Maryland State Bar Association (MSBA) **Supports HB37 - Reentry Services for Women - Commission and Pilot Program – Establishment.**

This bill will create a commission to study reentry services for women. The two-year commission is charged with studying the unique and specific needs that incarcerated women face when reentering civil society, look at what is currently being done and best practices, identify gaps in current services and develop a five-year plan as to how services can more effectively be provided. It also creates a pilot program within the Department of Public Safety and Corrections that can make grants to three local jurisdictions to implement programs targeted at women returning from the correctional system.

While a smaller portion of our prison population, women are still incarcerated and many, indeed, do face specific and unique obstacles to successful reentry compared to their male counterparts. There also appears to be a significant gap between the services available to and level of attention paid to women returning from incarceration and what is available, if only sporadically, to men. This bill will allow the state to identify the needs of reentering women and ways in which they can be assisted in successful reentry. The end result will be a safer community and a smoother process for reentry.

For the reasons stated, we **Support HB37.**

If you have questions about the position of the Criminal Law and Practice Section’s Legislative Committee, please feel free to address them to me at 240-606-1298 or at doyleniemann@gmail.com. Should you have other questions, please contact The MSBA’s Legislative Office at (410) 387-5606.

