

Testimony of Ilethea Murdough
Submitted to the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee
Hearing on SB632-The Monica Cooper Prerelease Act
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My name is Ilethea Murdough, and for 17 years, I was an inmate at the Maryland Correctional Institution for Women. During my last year in the prison, when I was in pre-release status, I saw case management's team deprive women of appropriate pre-release security status. I have seen case management deprive the women of job opportunities by not classifying them in a timely fashion. They have sent women on job interviews with prison uniforms on and with prison staff in the interview room. I have seen case management delay classification into pre-release so that the women were not there long enough to qualify for educational benefits and get their GEDs.

There were women who were classified into pre-release, but they lost that status because of a dirty urinalysis test. I saw 10 women thrown out of pre-release because of dirty urine even though the prison signed a contract with them saying they would not be thrown out of pre-release for a failed urine test. There has not been a therapeutic treatment program at MCI-W for women with drug issues since 2016.

The women in MCI-W are in dire need of a real pre-release program outside of MCI-W. In 2023 alone there were at least 30-35 drug overdoses in the prison and at least 10 deaths from drugs that were covered up by Margaret Chippendale, the former warden.

MCI-W is in need of help and a full investigation.

Thank you for this opportunity to submit my testimony to the Committee.

Ilethea Murdough