

WES MOORE  
Governor

ARUNA MILLER  
Lieutenant Governor



DOROTHY LENNIG  
Executive Director

January 28, 2025

Judicial Proceedings Committee  
2 East Miller Senate Office Building  
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: SB181 - Correctional Services - Geriatrics and Medical Parole - **Favorable**

Dear Chair Smith, Vice Chair Waldstreicher, and Members of the Committee:

The Governor's Office of Crime Prevention and Policy (GOCPP) respectfully supports Senate Bill 181. SB181 will require the Maryland Parole Commission to consider the age of an incarcerated person and will alter how the Commission evaluates a request for medical parole.

As the coordinating agency for the [Justice Reinvestment Act](#) (JRA), GOCPP supports initiatives that safely reduce the sentenced prison population. While the JRA lowered the age eligibility for geriatric parole from 65 to 60, it is rarely approved due to a technical issue within the law. SB181 will rectify eligibility barriers and create a pathway to compassionate release while still protecting public safety.

According to a report released by the [Justice Policy Institute](#), research has conclusively shown that by age 50 most people have significantly outlived the years in which they are most likely to commit crimes, arrest rates drop to just over two percent at age 50 and are almost zero percent at age 65.<sup>1</sup> As older incarcerated individuals pose a low public safety risk due to their age, SB181 will allow the State to safely reduce the State's prison population and further promote the justice reinvestment initiative.

Furthermore, in Maryland it costs approximately \$46,000 per year to incarcerate an individual. Nationally, the annual cost to incarcerate an individual rises to an estimated \$68,000 per year for someone over the age of 50. The difference is largely attributed to higher health care costs.<sup>2</sup> The cost savings associated with SB181 will assist the State in investing in holistic reentry programs for geriatric returning citizens.

GOCPP looks forward to further collaboration as we seek to improve the parole process and identify resources needed to support the Parole Commission. For more information, please contact Brandi Cahn, Assistant Director of Justice Reinvestment, [Brandi.Cahn1@maryland.com](mailto:Brandi.Cahn1@maryland.com).

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<sup>1</sup> Justice Policy Institute. Compassionate Release in Maryland, January 2022.

<https://justicepolicy.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/Maryland-Compassionate-Release.pdf>.

<sup>2</sup> Pro G, Marzell M. Medical Parole and Aging Prisoners: A Qualitative Study. J Correct Health Care. 2017 Apr;23(2):162-172. doi: 10.1177/1078345817699608. Epub 2017 Mar 30. PMID: 28358232.