



## **SB 181: Correctional Services - Geriatric and Medical Parole**

### **Testimony of the Maryland Independent Living Network**

#### **SUPPORT**

Senate Judicial Committee, January 28, 2025

The Maryland Independent Living Network is a coalition of the Maryland Statewide Independent Living Council and the seven Maryland-based Centers for Independent Living (CIL). CILs are created by federal law. CILs work to enhance the civil rights and quality of services for people with disabilities. There are seven CILs located throughout Maryland, operated by and for people with disabilities. CILs provide Information and Referral, Advocacy, Peer Support, Independent Living Skills training, and Transition Services to individuals with disabilities in their communities.

The Independent Living Network submits this written testimony in **support** of SB 181.

SB 181 clarifies the standards for geriatric and medical parole and brings Maryland's compassionate release standards in line with national standards.

The average age of incarcerated persons is continuously rising. Older persons that are incarcerated generally have higher medical needs and require additional taxpayer funds to address those needs.

The Justice Reinvestment Act (JRA) was enacted to improve public safety, reduce corrections spending, and reinvest avoided costs in evidence-based strategies to reduce crime and recidivism.

Older persons that are currently incarcerated pose a low public safety risk once paroled. If not paroled, the cost of ongoing imprisonment plus medical care is the highest of any category of incarcerated person. Furthermore, the savings generated by releasing inmates to parole would free taxpayer funds for services for young people at risk of offending. Any effort to reduce the number of incarcerated individuals reduces unnecessary expenditure of taxpayer funds for incarceration and those funds can be directed to efforts to reduce crime and recidivism.

The bill's provisions ensure public safety is maintained as specific conditions must be considered prior to granting parole.

Geriatric and medial parole is compassionate, fair and reasonable.

The Maryland Independent Living Network appreciates the consideration of these comments.

The Maryland Independent Living Network strongly **supports** SB 181 and urges a **favorable** report.

**Contact Information:**

Chris Kelter, Executive Director  
Accessible Resources for Independence  
443-713-3914  
[ckelter@arinow.org](mailto:ckelter@arinow.org)

Danielle Bustos, MDYLF Coordinator  
Independence Now  
240-898-2189  
[dbustos@innow.org](mailto:dbustos@innow.org)