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February 17, 2025

Senator William C. Smith, Jr., Chair
Senator Jeff Waldstreicher, Vice Chair
Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee
2 East, Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

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

RE: SB0702 - Correctional Services - Restrictive Housing

Position: SUPPORT

The Maryland Psychological Association, (MPA), which represents over 1,000 doctoral-level psychologists throughout the state, asks the House Judiciary Committee to report **FAVORABLY** on SB0702.

Restrictive housing in prisons has long been known to be damaging to mental health. The longer someone is held in such a setting, the more damage is placed on that individual's mental health. This bill will place stricter limitations on both the use and duration of restrictive housing, placing increased limitations on the length of time an individual may be housed in such a location as well as who may be housed there. The protections it provides for individuals with preexisting mental health conditions, disabilities, and youthful offenders are especially important, as these vulnerable populations are at a higher risk to be damaged by such types of housing.

Thank you for considering our comments on SB0702. If we can be of any further assistance as the Judiciary Committee considers this bill, please do not hesitate to contact MPA's Legislative Chair, Dr. Stephanie Wolf at mpalegislativcommittee@gmail.com.

Respectfully submitted,

David Goode-Cross, Ph.D.

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President

Stephanie Wolf, JD, Ph.D.

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Chair, MPA Legislative Committee

cc: Richard Bloch, Esq., Counsel for Maryland Psychological Association
Barbara Brocato & Dan Shattuck, MPA Government Affairs