



THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

**FAVORABLE – HB311--CORRECTIONAL SERVICES – MEDICAL PAROLE – LIFE IMPRISONMENT**

TO: Chair Clippinger, members of the Judiciary Committee

HB 311, if enacted will remove the governor from the decision-making process of medical parole.

As you may recall, in 2021 we repealed the Governor's involvement in the general parole process, but inadvertently left the Governor in charge of medical parole decisions.

This bill applies only to individuals who are incarcerated with the possibility of parole. It does not apply to those serving sentences without the possibility of parole, nor does it place any inmate in a more advantageous position or grant any additional privileges over anyone else who has the possibility of parole.

Medical parole was established in 2008 to allow the release of incapacitated inmates with certain medical conditions who do not pose a danger to public safety. However, the current law requires gubernatorial approval for medical parole, which comes with a 180-day waiting period. This lengthy process has resulted in very few approvals. For example, in 2021, five inmates died while awaiting gubernatorial approval for medical parole.

Under current law, inmates with the possibility of parole can be released based solely on the decision of the parole board. It's only logical and fair to extend this same process to incapacitated or chronically debilitated inmates. Now is the time to fix this technical error. The Governor was removed from the parole process, let's finish what we started and correct the oversight.

This bill is no different than the bill we passed in 2021 to repeal the provisions that authorize the Governor to disapprove certain parole decisions. We passed that bill because the Parole Board has the ability and capacity to determine release, and we should pass HB311 for the same reason.

Thank you for your consideration. A favorable report is requested.