

Chair Luke Clippinger, and honorable members of the Judiciary Committee. Today, I am writing in favor of HB 1423.

My name is Mooti Chimdi, a junior at Montgomery Blair High School and Committee member representing the Maryland chapter of the American Youth Association (AYA) and advocating for HB1423.

As an African American, I live with the unsettling reality that encounters with law enforcement could likely result in unfair or disproportionate treatment based on the color of my skin. This is not an abstract fear-rather one rooted in the infamous systematic inequalities within our criminal justice system.

Data from [the Justice Policy Institute](#) states that over 70 percent of Maryland's prison population was black as of July 2018. Given this data was collected six years ago, the passage of HB 1423 would ensure statistics like these are reflected into policy. Additionally, the bill would address key racial disparities that exist in our state such as policing practices and parole outcomes.

By bringing together expert members across various Maryland-based groups, the bill will further enact programs designed to reduce State prison populations and encourage more rehabilitative justice initiatives. For non-white individuals like myself, research and studies into these practices are more than just another government-centered research project, but a plan to tackle the fears of people like myself state-wide.

Maryland is a state dedicated to promoting equity in all facets of our life, not limited to the justice system. Thus, for the reasons stated above I urge the committee to issue a favorable report on HB1423.