



VISION - *BRIDGE Maryland sees the state challenged by a history of inequity but engaged in community organizing for a more just tomorrow.*

MISSION - *BRIDGE Maryland uses intentional relationship building, organizing, and intensive leadership development in order to strengthen congregations and faith leaders to demonstrate and advance justice in the world.*

**HB853 - CRIMINAL PROCEDURE - PETITION TO REDUCE SENTENCE (MARYLAND SECOND LOOK ACT)  
FAVORABLE**

Dear Chair Clippinger, Vice Chair Bartlett, and members of the Judiciary Committee,

BRIDGE Maryland, Inc. is an interfaith organization with laity and religious leaders who identify and address community issues by building power to pursue equity and opportunity for all Marylanders. And we **support HB853 as written and ask for a favorable report.** Why do we have laws because it appears some lawmakers and citizens have forgotten. We have laws to maintain order, protect individual rights, ensure justice, and promote the common good within society. They provide a framework for behavior, helping people understand what is acceptable and what isn't. **LAWS are not created to punish people indefinitely.** To be more specific laws:

1. **Maintain Order and Safety:** Laws prevent chaos by setting boundaries for acceptable behavior. They protect people from harm, whether physical (like assault) or financial (like fraud).
2. **Protect Individual Rights and Liberties:** Laws safeguard personal freedoms, such as freedom of speech, property rights, and the right to privacy.
3. **Resolve Conflicts:** When disputes arise, laws provide a formal process for resolution, ensuring fairness and consistency.
4. **Promote Social Justice:** Laws help address inequalities and protect vulnerable populations from discrimination and exploitation.
5. **Facilitate Social Change:** Laws can encourage societal progress by reflecting evolving values and norms (e.g., civil rights laws).
6. **Provide Predictability and Stability:** Knowing the rules helps people make informed decisions and plan for the future.

Overall, laws create a structure that balances individual freedoms with the needs of the community, promoting a safe and just society.

Again, sadly society has been bamboozled and hoodwinked by the chaos “bleed and Lead” media that we believe in an Old Testament theology of an “eye for an eye” justice which one, leaves everyone blind to redemption; and two, that is not justice at all because anyone can change for the good. Let’s give these **eligible human beings** a second chance because WE ALL deserve at least one.

Again, we support HB853 **for these reasons and we strongly encourage this committee to issue a favorable report on HB853.**

Sincerely,

*Marlon Tilghman*

Rev. Dr. Marlon Tilghman

Executive Board, BRIDGE Maryland, Inc. (Organized in Baltimore City and five surrounding counties)