



**Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services
Office of the Secretary**

6776 Reisterstown Road, Baltimore, Maryland 21215
410-585-3346 – TOLL FREE 877-379-8636 • www.dpscs.maryland.gov

BILL: HOUSE BILL 1156

POSITION: OPPOSE

STATE OF MARYLAND

WES MOORE
GOVERNOR

ARUNA MILLER
LT. GOVERNOR

CAROLYN J. SCRUGGS
SECRETARY

ANTHONY A. GASKINS
CHIEF OF STAFF

JOSEPH SEDTAL
DEPUTY SECRETARY
ADMINISTRATION

ANNIE D. HARVEY
DEPUTY SECRETARY
OPERATIONS

ANGELINA GUARINO
ASSISTANT SECRETARY
DATA, POLICY AND GRANTS

RENARD E. BROOKS
ASSISTANT SECRETARY
PROGRAMS, TREATMENT &
RE-ENTRY SERVICES

EXPLANATION: HB 1156 alters the membership of the Maryland Parole Commission from 10 members to at least 15 with a limit to 20 members and the composition of the membership. Additionally, the role of the Secretary of the Department of Public Safety and Correctional services and the Senate are eliminated from appointing members of the commission. Finally, the use of hearing examiners would be repealed.

COMMENTS:

- The Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services (Department) operates the Division of Correction (DOC), the Division of Pretrial Detention and Services (DPDS), and the Division of Parole and Probation (DPP).
- In accordance with Correctional Services Article (CSA) §7–201, the Maryland Parole Commission (Commission) was established in the Department.
- Altering the membership of the Maryland Parole Commission from 10 Commissioners to at least 15 with a limit to 20 would have a significant fiscal and operational impact. The Commission would have to increase staffing by at least 50% and potentially 100%. This would include support staff, administrative personnel, and hearing officers. Increasing the number of staff members would require larger office space as well as office and electronic equipment.
- Hearing examiners provide tremendous support to the Commissioners. The hearing examiners do much of the preparatory work necessary prior to a hearing, conduct research, and support the administrative staff. Additionally, they draft new policies and procedures for the commission and serve as liaisons to other criminal justice agencies.
- HB 1156 also states the Governor shall appoint the Commissioners from among nominees chosen by a specific panel of members. The Secretary of the Department should be included in the nomination process due to the impact on the Department. Furthermore, curtailing the requirements of membership would reduce the number of potential applicants increasing the length of time to fill positions.

CONCLUSION: For these reasons, the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services respectfully requests an UNFAVORABLE Committee report on House Bill 1156.