



MARYLAND LEGISLATIVE LATINO CAUCUS

Lowe House Office Building, 6 Bladen Street, Room 200 · Annapolis, Maryland 21401
Phone 410-841-3374 | 301-858-3374 · 800-492-7122 Ext. 3374 · Fax 410-841-3342 | 301-858-3342
latino.caucus@house.state.md.us · www.mdlatinocaucus.org

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TO: Delegate Luke Clippinger, Chair
Delegate Sandy J. Bartlett, Vice Chair
Judiciary Committee Members
FROM: Maryland Legislative Latino Caucus
DATE: February 25, 2025
RE: HB311– Correctional Services – Medical Parole – Life Imprisonment

The MLLC supports HB311 – Correctional Services – Medical Parole – Life Imprisonment, 2025

The MLLC is a bipartisan group of Senators and Delegates committed to supporting legislation that improves the lives of Latinos throughout our state. The MLLC is a crucial voice in the development of public policy that uplifts the Latino community and benefits the state of Maryland. Thank you for allowing us the opportunity to express our support of HB311.

The Department of Justice finds that there is minimal public safety benefit to incarcerating high numbers of older men and women. Geriatric age inmates in Maryland have the lowest recidivism rate out of any other group with approximately 13.5% of individuals likely to be rearrested upon release.¹ With older adults in Maryland less likely to reoffend, keeping older individuals incarcerated brings little public safety benefit and instead brings increased costs due to more complex health conditions and needs among elderly adults. On average, the costs of caring for older inmates is three to nine times the costs of caring for younger inmates.²

The following bill removes the provision that the Governor must approve the Maryland Parole Commission's decision to grant medical parole to an incarcerated individual serving a life sentence. Eliminating the governor from the medical parole process removes political and bureaucratic hurdles and instead relies on decisions driven by medical and public safety considerations. Additionally, medical parole reforms are key to addressing racial disparities within the prison system. According to the Justice Policy Institute, Latinos in Maryland are incarcerated at a rate 2.5 times higher than their White counterparts.³ The Maryland State Commission on Criminal Sentencing Policy noted that Hispanic individuals are often sentenced for more serious offenses, leading to longer periods of incarceration.⁴ With Latinos and other racial minorities making up a disproportionate amount of the state prison population, streamlining the medical parole will ensure that older individuals among these groups receive better quality health care in their later years.

For these reasons, the Maryland Legislative Latino Caucus respectfully requests a favorable report on HB311.

¹ [The aging prison population: Causes, costs, and consequences](#)

² [For Seriously Ill Prisoners, Consider Evidence-Based Compassionate Release Policies](#)

³ [Race and Incarceration in Maryland](#)

⁴ [An Assessment of Racial Differences in Maryland Guidelines-Eligible Sentencing Events](#)