



PO Box 368 Laurel, MD 20725

410-992-4258

www.marylandpsychology.org

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February 28, 2025

Delegate Luke Clippinger, Chair
Delegate J. Sandy Bartlett, Vice Chair
House Judiciary Committee
100 Taylor House Office Building
101 Taylor House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Dear Chair Clippinger, Vice Chair Bartlett, and Members of the Committee:

RE: HB0647 - Correctional Services - Restrictive Housing

Position: SUPPORT

The Maryland Psychological Association, (MPA), which represents over 1,000 doctoral-level psychologists throughout the state, asks the House Judiciary Committee to report FAVORABLY on HB0647.

Restrictive housing in prisons has long been known to be damaging to mental health. The longer someone is held in such a setting, the more damage is placed on that individual's mental health. This bill will place stricter limitations on both the use and duration of restrictive housing, placing increased limitations on the length of time an individual may be housed in such a location as well as who may be housed there. The protections it provides for individuals with preexisting mental health conditions, disabilities, and youthful offenders are especially important, as these vulnerable populations are at a higher risk to be damaged by such types of housing.

Thank you for considering our comments on HB0647. If we can be of any further assistance as the Judiciary Committee considers this bill, please do not hesitate to contact MPA's Legislative Chair, Dr. Stephanie Wolf at mpalegislativcommittee@gmail.com.

Respectfully submitted,

David Goode-Cross, Ph.D.
David Goode-Cross, Ph.D.
President

Stephanie Wolf, JD, Ph.D.
Stephanie Wolf, JD, Ph.D.
Chair, MPA Legislative Committee

cc: Richard Bloch, Esq., Counsel for Maryland Psychological Association
Barbara Brocato & Dan Shattuck, MPA Government Affairs