



# Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry of Maryland

## Testimony in Support of HB 190: Correctional Services - Geriatric and Medical Parole

TO: Delegate Luke Clippinger, Chair, and Members of the House Judiciary Committee  
FROM: Karen “Candy” Clark, Criminal Justice Lead Advocate  
Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry of Maryland  
DATE: February 25, 2025

The state-wide Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry of Maryland asks for a favorable vote for **HB 190 - Correctional Services - Geriatric and Medical Parole**. This bill upholds our basic values of justice and equity.

Our prison systems’ purpose is to separate people who are illegally disrupting our communities and/or are a threat to others. ensure a safe environment in which everyone can thrive. This does not characterize the prison population who would be eligible for this parole—the elderly and the infirm.

Most of the elderly population of our prison are over 60 years old and have served lengthy prison sentences that have extended their stay well beyond the age range in which they are likely to commit crimes. In fact, in Maryland’s famous Unger case—where the average age of the released prisoner was 64—the recidivism rate was only 3%, (compared to 40% for younger offenders) after 3 years on the outside.

The Medical Portion of this Bill enhances last year’s bill by providing more clarity and detailed procedures for those who care for medically-challenged persons, including:

- Defining the conditions that would meet a “Chronically debilitated or incapacitated” condition, including those with a terminal illness. For example: If the condition prevents them from completing one normal daily activity, (like dressing, breathing, going to the toilet, etc.)
- Altering how the parole commission evaluates a request for medical parole. Who and where it can be performed, and what to do if the condition is no longer present.
- Providing 5 different ways to clarify who can request the evaluation and where it can be completed.
- It also offers the option for the Governor to be involved and would allow him to approve or disapprove the medical parole.

The bill continues to thoroughly cover all aspects of the issues that occur with this condition and situation, it also requires specific data to be recorded for annual evaluation and record-keeping. It displaces intense care and compassion about how everyone with special needs should be treated.

**UULM-MD c/o UU Church of Annapolis 333 Dubois Road Annapolis, MD 21401 410-266-8044,**

[www.uulmmd.org](http://www.uulmmd.org) [info@uulmmd.org](mailto:info@uulmmd.org) [www.facebook.com/uulmmd](https://www.facebook.com/uulmmd) [www.Twitter.com/uulmmd](https://www.Twitter.com/uulmmd)

Upon release, the patients are still in the correctional system under the management of parole. Since they are no longer a dangerous threat, our faith calls for a compassionate release process for them. This is why the Unitarian Universalists Legislative Ministry of Maryland respectfully asks for your support.

Respectfully submitted,

*Karen Clark*

UULM-MD Criminal Justice Lead Advocate