



# LEGISLATIVE BLACK CAUCUS OF MARYLAND, INC.

The Maryland House of Delegates, 6 Bladen Street, Room 300, Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
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February 2, 2025

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Chairman Luke Clippinger  
Judiciary Committee  
100 Taylor House Office Building  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Dear Chairman Clippinger, Vice Chairwoman Bartlett, and Members of the Committee,

The Legislative Black Caucus of Maryland offers strong favorable support for House Bill 190 (HB0190) – Correctional Services – Geriatric and Medical Parole. This bill introduces essential reforms to Maryland's parole process, addressing the unique needs of elderly and medically incapacitated incarcerated individuals while ensuring a fair and humane approach to parole considerations. House Bill 190 is a 2025 legislative priority for the Black Caucus.

As the population of incarcerated individuals continues to age, the costs of medical care and supervision for geriatric and terminally ill individuals place significant financial burdens on Maryland's correctional system. The U.S. Department of Justice concluded in 2025 the aging prison population is significantly increasing healthcare costs, with older inmates often costing two to three times more to incarcerate than younger inmates due to their greater medical needs. To add, their studies have shown that prisons with high percentages of elderly inmates spend significantly more per inmate on medical care, sometimes up to five times more than prisons with lower elderly populations.

House Bill 190 requires the Maryland Parole Commission to consider the age of incarcerated individuals when determining parole eligibility, acknowledging the reduced likelihood of recidivism among older individuals. This approach aligns with evidence-based practices that emphasize risk assessment and proportionality in sentencing and parole decisions.

Additionally, the bill reforms the medical parole process by expanding eligibility to include individuals with chronic, debilitating conditions or terminal illnesses. It requires that the Maryland Parole Commission evaluate comprehensive medical assessments and consider community-based resources for housing and medical care. These changes help ensure that individuals who no longer pose a threat to

public safety are afforded the opportunity for release in a manner that respects their dignity and addresses their health needs.

To promote transparency and accountability, House Bill 190 mandates annual reporting by the Maryland Parole Commission to the Justice Reinvestment Oversight Board. These reports will provide critical insights into the outcomes of geriatric and medical parole decisions, enabling ongoing assessment and refinement of policies to ensure fairness and efficacy.

By prioritizing the health and rehabilitation of elderly and medically vulnerable individuals, House Bill 190 advances principles of justice and equity while allowing Maryland to redirect resources toward effective reentry services and community support. The bill's provisions reflect the Caucus' commitment to addressing systemic disparities and advocating for reforms that uphold human rights within the criminal justice system.

House Bill 190 represents a thoughtful and compassionate approach to parole reform. It balances public safety with fiscal responsibility and humane treatment, ensuring that policies reflect Maryland's values of equity and fairness. For these reasons, the Legislative Black Caucus of Maryland strongly supports House Bill 190 and urges a favorable vote.

Legislative Black Caucus of Maryland

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