



Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services

Office of the Secretary

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BILL: HOUSE BILL 194

POSITION: LETTER OF INFORMATION

STATE OF MARYLAND

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EXPLANATION: House Bill 194 will require the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services Department to develop and offer an apprenticeship program to provide incarcerated individuals the opportunity to serve as a paid apprentice in a skilled trade at an agency or unit of State or local government or a private entity. The program is to be independent and separate from those offered by the Maryland Correctional Enterprises.

COMMENTS:

- The Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services' (Department) Division of Correction operates 13 State correctional facilities housing individuals sentenced to periods of incarceration for 18 months and longer. The Department also oversees five facilities located in Baltimore City that houses pretrial detainees and incarcerated individuals sentenced to incarceration for periods of 18 months and less.
- The Department Labor has an Workforce Development and Apprentice Unit that places incarcerated individuals in multiple occupational programs, including Certified Peer Recovery Specialists, as well as pre-apprenticeship programs in electrical, building maintenance, HVAC, welding, among others.
- The Department of Labor's Office of Correctional Education works in partnership with DPSCS, which also provides job and education training.
- If the Department were to develop State-run apprenticeship programming, hiring of qualified tradesmen who are licensed to train via apprenticeship would incur additional salary costs for The implementation of this apprenticeship program with outside partners would, at a minimum, require staffing to arrange employment and provide transportation.
- The Department will be required to partner with State and Local governments and private entities who are approved by the

Maryland Department of Labor to offer apprenticeship programs in skilled trades.

- An Agreement between the Department and each participating employer will require development defining the terms and scope of each program, including the agreed upon amount the employer will pay to the Department each day an incarcerated individual is employed as part of the program. The Agreement will also define the compensation rate the employer will pay the incarcerated individual, which can be no less than the State minimum wage.
- Passage of HB 194 will have a significant impact on the Department totaling over \$940,000 in FY 27 for staffing to operate to develop and administer the program and custody staff.

CONCLUSION: The Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services respectfully requests the Committee consider this information as it deliberates House Bill 194.