



## Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry of Maryland

### Testimony in Support of SB 61- Division of Correction - Release Preparation Program

To: Delegate Melissa Wells, Chair, Delegate Kenneth Kerr, and  
Members of the Government, Labor and Elections Committee  
From: Karen "Candy" Clark, Lead Advocate Criminal Justice Reform  
Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry-Maryland  
Date: April 2, 2026

The Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry of Maryland selects its bills to align with its values. **SB 61- Criminal Procedure - Motion to Reduce Duration of Sentence - Repeal of Sentencing Date Limitation** is a compassionate program to help those who are "behind the walls" prepare for their future after they are released. The bill provides for formerly incarcerated individuals to assist newly and potentially un-incarcerated individuals as they re-enter society. These interactions add a deeper, more personal, and more effective way to prepare someone to return to society. Instead of a few rushed meetings at the end of their sentence, their Release Preparation Program begins "as soon as they enter the prison." Typically men and women have separate and very different types of release programs. This program intends to meet the needs of both men and women, and sometimes juveniles. The program targets six main areas to practice needed skills: health, nutrition, employment, finance, legal requirements, and academic focuses.

Beside being an impressive program, this is also a fiscally responsible bill, and would be funded through the Cannabis Regulation and Enforcement Fund. **SB 61** clearly specifies the details of its management. Currently, with the budget considerations of our State Assembly, this effort by Senator Sydnor and team is remarkable.

UULM-MD is looking forward to seeing the positive impact of **SB 61**; we ask for a favorable report.

Thank you,  
*Karen "Candy" Clark*

*Criminal Justice Reform Lead Advocate*