



**Testimony in Support of HB 194 – Incarcerated Individual Apprenticeship Pilot Program  
Judicial Proceedings Committee Hearing Date: 3/26/26**

Dear Chair Smith, Vice Chair Waldstreicher, and Members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee:

A Mother's Cry (AMC) asks for a favorable vote on HB 194, the Incarcerated Individual Apprenticeship Pilot Program.

AMC consists of mothers and family members of those incarcerated in MD state prisons. We advocate for improved prison conditions not just so our loved ones can survive their sentence, but also so they can thrive upon their release. Many correctional facilities are too often on lockdown, blocking many incarcerated individuals from engaging in meaningful programs or work that would help them gain useful skills.

HB 194 creates a pilot program at the Baltimore City Correctional Center (BCCC) which would give incarcerated individuals the opportunity to work in an apprenticeship for an agency. BCCC trainees are certified or documented for their training and paid work experience to be credited toward a Work Release program that can effectively place them in relevant community paid apprenticeships or jobs. This program is a recommendation from the Prison Education Delivery Reform Commission.

Baltimore City is a main driver of overincarceration and racial inequity in our state. Most of the BCCC population is incarcerated from and returning to Baltimore City, and many employers in this area would be partners in helping to implement this program. AMC believes this bill to be an important first step toward averting further harm of redlining and the old model of the school-to-prison pipeline.

Many of AMC's loved ones are incarcerated in the Eastern and Western regions. With very few programming opportunities at the larger prisons like ECI and WCI, a program like this would be crucial to moving towards a rehabilitative model. AMC expects that this pilot, starting at the BCCC, will become a successful model to be expanded into all of Maryland's state prisons. There is nothing currently preventing DPSCS from providing connections to trade apprenticeships that

are in line with occupational programs; HB 194 would give them the necessary direction to do so.

As mothers of incarcerated individuals, we urge a favorable vote on HB 194 so that our loved ones can gain valuable skills, find motivation and purpose, and bolster their hope during incarceration.

Sincerely,

*Michele Kennedy-Kouadio*

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Vice President, A Mother's Cry

*Jamesina Greene*

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