



Maryland Occupational Therapy Association

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Committee:	Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee
Bill Number:	Senate Bill 268
Title:	Correctional Services – Restrictive Housing – Individuals With Developmental or Intellectual Disabilities
Hearing Date:	February 4, 2026
Position:	Support

The Maryland Occupational Therapy Association (MOTA) supports Senate Bill 268 - Correctional Services – Restrictive Housing – Individuals With Developmental or Intellectual Disabilities. The bill requires a clinical professional to assess individuals with developmental or intellectual disabilities when they enter a state correctional facility and allow that professional to recommend how they should be housed. The bill would also prohibit placing these individuals in restrictive housing for more than 15 consecutive days in a 30-day period unless they commit certain serious acts.

Occupational therapy (OT) is rooted in promoting participation, dignity, and functional well-being, and restrictive housing severely limits meaningful activity, social interaction, and sensory input. For individuals with cognitive or developmental disabilities, isolation can intensify anxiety, confusion, behavioral distress, and functional decline. OTs are trained to evaluate how cognitive, emotional, and environmental factors affect a person's ability to function safely and adaptively. Identifying disability-related needs early helps ensure that individuals are placed in environments that match their abilities and support regulation, communication, and positive behavior, rather than punishing disability-related behaviors that stem from unmet needs or lack of accommodation.

The bill closely reflects OT's commitment to disability rights. People with intellectual and developmental disabilities are disproportionately harmed by punitive correctional practices, including restrictive housing. By limiting the use of isolation except in extreme circumstances, the bill supports more equitable treatment and aligns with broader disability rights frameworks

We ask for a favorable report. If we can provide any further information, please contact Michael Paddy at mpaddy@policypartners.net.