



MARYLAND
CATHOLIC
CONFERENCE

January 28, 2026

SB 61

Division of Correction - Release Preparation Program

Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee

Senate Finance Committee

Position: FAVORABLE

The Maryland Catholic Conference offers this testimony in support of Senate Bill 61. The Catholic Conference is the public policy representative of the three (arch)dioceses serving Maryland, which together encompass over one million Marylanders. Statewide, their parishes, schools, hospitals and numerous charities combine to form our state's second largest social service provider network, behind only our state government.

Senate Bill 61 would establish a Release Preparation Program within the Division of Correction, allowing formerly incarcerated individuals to re-enter correctional facilities for the purpose of assisting those currently incarcerated with their transition back into society.

The Catholic Church roots much of its social justice teaching in the inherent dignity of every human person and the principals of forgiveness, redemption and restoration. Catholic doctrine provides that the criminal justice system should serve three principal purposes: (1) the preservation and protection of the common good of society, (2) the restoration of public order, and (3) the restoration or conversion of the offender.

The Conference submits that this legislation provides a means to restoration for those that have been imprisoned by supporting their reentry into society, but also gives purpose and greater meaning to the experiences of those who have already reentered by affording them the ability to pass along wisdom and nurture to those about to reenter society.

Senate Bill 61 provides some necessary support to those seeking to reincorporate themselves into society, while allowing them to gain knowledge and experience in reentry from those who can best empathize with what is often a struggle. The Maryland Catholic Conference thus urges this committee to return a favorable report on Senate Bill 61.