

sb 322 hb 414 Juror Disqualif Position Paper FINAL

Uploaded by: Alison Dodge

Position: FAV



2026 POSITION PAPER

SB 322 / HB 414 Courts – Jury Service – Disqualification FAVORABLE

The Maryland Association for Justice (MAJ) supports SB 322 and HB 414.

Under current law, a potential juror is disqualified from jury services if convicted of a misdemeanor or felony punishable by imprisonment exceeding 1 year and was sentenced to prison for more than 1 year.

If adopted, a prospective juror is only disqualified from eligibility in Maryland state courts if the person was convicted and sentenced for more than 1 year **and** is 1) currently serving that sentence or 2) on probation **OR** 3) the conviction related to perjury, witness / jury intimidation, or Fraud and Related Crimes defined in Md. Code, Criminal Law Article, Title 8.

A person who served his or her complete criminal sentence plus probation would be eligible for jury service because that person paid their debt to society. That person should no longer be prevented from jury service.

Constitutionally, juries must be composed of community members who will fairly judge the case based on community standards. *Duren v. Missouri*, 439 U.S. 357 (1979) (criminal defendant's 6th Amendment rights). In *Lovell v. State*, 347 Md. 623, 662 (1997), the Court considered whether the jury represented a cross-section of the community, and thus whether the trial was fair, when African-American jurors were excluded from the jury pool based on voting registrations. In *State v. Calhoun*, 306 Md. 692, 711 (1986), the Court again acknowledged that the jury must represent a fair cross-section of the community as guaranteed by the 6th Amendment.

The rationale for excluding people convicted of felonies has been criticized because of imbalanced racial impact. A 2003 study indicates that over 6% of the adult population and about 30% of black men are excluded from jury service. Kalt, *The Exclusion of Felons From Jury Service*, SSRN Electronic Journal Aug. 2003. A 2021 study by the non-partisan Prison Policy Initiative nonprofit states that jury exclusion laws disproportionately exclude Black and Lantinx people. In 2010, about 19 million Americans have felony convictions and 36% (~7 million) are Black, despite Black people only comprising 13% of the population. *Rigging the jury: How each state reduces jury diversity by excluding people with criminal records* (2021).

A lifetime exclusion from jury service (current law) because the person was sentenced to more than 1 year in jail for a misdemeanor or felony is too broad and is racially biased. This Bill creates balance by permitting jury eligibility for misdemeanor violators and people with past felony convictions who completely served jail and probation sentences and did not commit a disqualifying offense. This promotes the constitutional guarantee that a jury be comprised of a full cross-section of the community.

Maryland Association for Justice urges a FAVORABLE Report.

About Maryland Association for Justice

The Maryland Association for Justice (MAJ) represents over 1,250 trial attorneys throughout Maryland. MAJ advocates to preserve the civil justice system, protect consumers' rights, and educate and advance members' knowledge and abilities.

10440 Little Patuxent Parkway, Suite 250
Columbia, MD 21044

(410) 872-0990 | FAX (410) 872-0993
info@mdforjustice.com
mdforjustice.com

03_SB 322 Testimony - Sydnor - JPR.pdf

Uploaded by: Charles Sydnor III

Position: FAV

CHARLES E. SYDNOR III, ESQ.
Legislative District 44
Baltimore County

DEPUTY MAJORITY WHIP

Judicial Proceedings Committee
Executive Nominations Committee
Legislative Policy Committee

Joint Committees

Administrative, Executive, and
Legislative Review

Children, Youth, and Families

Senate Chair, Legislative Ethics



James Senate Office Building
11 Bladen Street, Room 216
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
410-841-3612
800-492-7122 Ext. 3612
Charles.Sydnor@senate.maryland.gov

THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Testimony for SB 322
Courts – Jury Service - Disqualification
Before the: Judicial Proceedings Committee
February 3, 2026

Good afternoon Chair Smith, members of the committee.

Maryland law prohibits individuals who have been convicted and sentenced to imprisonment for more than one year from participating in jury service.¹ This is one of the harshest jury exclusion statutes in the nation; Maryland is one of five states that exclude those convicted of misdemeanors and offer no re-enfranchisement except if pardoned.²

This disenfranchisement disproportionately impacts Black Marylanders, particularly Black men. While Black residents make up 31% of Maryland's population,³ 71% of the Division of Correction's inmate population is Black.⁴ Disproportionately excluding Black Marylanders from jury service not only denies those individuals the opportunity to contribute to their community, but research also shows that when Black jurors are included in the process, juries deliberate more carefully and make fewer factual errors.⁵

Senate Bill 322 changes our jury exclusion statute to remedy this injustice. Instead of excluding anyone convicted of a crime punishable by more than a year in prison, SB 322 excludes anyone currently serving a sentence, whether incarcerated, on parole, or on probation, and anyone

¹ See the existing § 8-103(b)(4) of the Courts and Judicial Proceedings Article.

² Katy Naples-Mitchel & Haruka Margaret Braun, *Jury Exclusion of People with Felony Convictions by State*, 1 (Jun. 2023).

³ US Census Data, 2024 estimate.

⁴ Division of Correction Data Dashboard, FY 2024 data.

⁵ Samuel R. Sommers, *On Racial Diversity and Group Decision Making: Identifying Multiple Effects of Racial Composition on Jury Deliberations*, 90 J. Personality and Social Psych, 597, 606 (2006).

convicted of a crime like perjury, witness intimidation, or jury intimidation that hinders their ability to serve faithfully on a jury.⁶

This sound policy change aligns Maryland with the vast majority of states, maintaining the integrity of our juries and expands the pool of potential jurors to those who should not be excluded. Jury service is a vital part of our justice system and excluding every individual with a conviction hinders that system's ability to function effectively and legitimately. People who have had contact with the criminal legal system remain members of their communities and should not be excluded from one of our nation's most fundamental civic duties- especially one that directly affects them- and in which they should have the opportunity to participate once they have completed their sentences.

Senate Bill 322 provides a remedy to a statutory barrier to jury service that keeps Maryland juries disproportionately homogeneous and discredits the efficiency and legitimacy of our justice system.

For these reasons, I ask for a favorable report on Senate Bill 322.

⁶ See the proposed language in § 8-103(b)(4).

SB 322 MOPD FAV Jury disq.docx (1).pdf

Uploaded by: Elizabeth Hilliard

Position: FAV



NATASHA M. DARTIGUE
PUBLIC DEFENDER
KEITH LOTRIDGE
DEPUTY PUBLIC DEFENDER
HANNIBAL KEMERER
CHIEF OF STAFF
ELIZABETH HILLIARD
DIRECTOR OF GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

POSITION ON PROPOSED LEGISLATION

BILL: Senate Bill 322 - Courts - Jury Service - Disqualification

FROM: Maryland Office of the Public Defender

POSITION: Favorable

DATE: 2/03/2026

The Maryland Office of the Public Defender respectfully requests that the Committee issue a favorable report on Senate Bill 322.

Senate Bill 322 would limit the number of individuals who are currently disenfranchised from serving on a jury in Maryland. Where one third of all Americans have a criminal record, this bill would allow more Marylanders to serve their community through jury service. In particular, this bill would have a significant impact on increasing opportunities for jury representation, whereby Maryland currently leads the nation in incarcerating young Black men – such that Maryland has incarcerated the highest percentage of people who are Black in this country, more than twice the national average. The Justice Policy Institute (JPI) has found more than 70% of all people in Maryland’s prisons, double the national average, and almost 80% of people serving at least 10 [years, are Black](#). These are the highest rates in the country, easily eclipsing the next closest states – Mississippi, South Carolina and Georgia.

The bill changes the current law which has a more expansive view of individuals ineligible for jury service because of criminal convictions. Individuals with criminal contacts are still members of their community and should not be silenced or prevented from one our country’s most basic civic duties, but also one that individuals with criminal records are directly impacted by and should have a right to participate in after their sentences have been served.

For these reasons, the Maryland Office of the Public Defender urges this Committee to issue a favorable report on Senate Bill 322.

Submitted by: Maryland Office of the Public Defender, Government Relations Division.

SB 322 CCJR Jury Disqualification FAV.pdf

Uploaded by: Heather Warnken

Position: FAV

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 322

Courts - Jury Service - Disqualification

TO: Members of the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee

FROM: Center for Criminal Justice Reform, University of Baltimore School of Law

DATE: January 30, 2026

The University of Baltimore School of Law’s Center for Criminal Justice Reform (“Center”) is dedicated to supporting community-driven efforts to improve public safety and address the harm and inequities caused by the criminal legal system. The Center strongly supports Senate Bill 322.

Access to a trial by jury of one’s peers is a fundamental tenet of the American legal system. Yet in Maryland, especially for Black and Brown residents accused of crimes, this is simply not the reality. The statistics on jury exclusion are alarming: across the country, approximately one-third of Black men have a past felony conviction; thus due to laws in numerous states, many Black jurors are excluded by law from ever entering the jury pool. Maryland takes this even further, having both the highest overrepresentation of Black people incarcerated (71% of our prison population compared to 29% of the state population),¹ combined with **one of the most restrictive jury exclusion statutes in the country**. Maryland is one of only a small handful of states which excludes people from jury service if they have been convicted of a **misdemeanor** and received a sentence of more than a year of incarceration.

SB 322 would remove this outdated and highly problematic barrier, allowing for greater diversity of our jury pools and the re-enfranchisement of people with past convictions who have paid their debt to society. Allowing for greater participation in this important civic duty is not only fair, it is more effective in advancing the efficiency and legitimacy of our justice system. Verdicts rendered by juries viewed as more fully representative of the community are more likely to be viewed as legitimate by the public, and research demonstrates that diverse juries “deliberated longer and considered a wider range of information than did homogeneous groups.”²

¹ See Ashley Nellis, Ph.D., Senior Research Analyst at The Sentencing Project, *The Color of Justice: Racial and Ethnic Disparity in State Prisons* (2021) at 20.

² According to research, “when white people were members of racially mixed juries, they “raised more case facts, made fewer factual errors, and were more amenable to discussion of race-related issues.” Another study found that people on racially mixed juries “are more likely to respect different racial perspectives and to confront their own prejudice and stereotypes[.]” See Prison Policy Initiative Rigging the Jury report, <https://www.prisonpolicy.org/reports/juryexclusion.html>.

Through successful passage of SB 322, Maryland can join a growing number of states addressing the disproportionate impact of jury disqualification on Black and Brown communities. Most recently, prior to leaving office, former New Jersey Governor Phil Murphy signed an executive order that restored jury service eligibility to hundreds of thousands of residents, recognizing that a representative jury is a prerequisite for a fair trial.³ Previously, New Jersey followed a policy similar to Maryland's, disqualifying individuals with past convictions from jury service for life.⁴ The Governor acknowledged the role that systemic inequity and racialized policing played in the over-representation of Black residents in the criminal legal system, subsequently excluding them from the jury box. The executive order utilized clemency power to restore jury service eligibility to all residents who had completed their sentences for indictable offenses as of the order's effective date, taking a critical step toward correcting systemic injustices which persist and reverberate in under-appreciated ways.

Maryland is in the position to finally take a major step forward in addressing this issue, and has a responsibility to do so. States cannot claim to value a fair and impartial justice system while simultaneously silencing the perspectives of those most affected by it. SB 322 offers a necessary corrective measure to decades of exclusionary practices that have diluted the diversity of our courtrooms, and disenfranchised members of our community from this important civic participation. It is critical that Maryland move beyond these outdated barriers and embrace a justice system that values the contributions and redemption of **every** citizen.

For these reasons, we urge a favorable report on SB 322.

³ N.J. Exec. Order No. 411 (Jan. 11, 2026)

⁴ Press Release, ACLU-NJ, *ACLU-NJ Applauds Executive Order Expanding Jury Service Eligibility to People with Criminal Convictions* (Jan. 11, 2026), <https://www.aclu-nj.org/press-releases/aclu-nj-applauds-executive-order-expanding-jury-service-eligibility-to-people-with-criminal-convictions/>

SB 322_ACLUMD_FAV.pdf

Uploaded by: Olivia Spaccasi

Position: FAV



Testimony for the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee

February 3, 2026

SB 322 Courts - Jury Service – Disqualification

FAVORABLE

OLIVIA SPACCASI
PUBLIC POLICY
ANALYST

AMERICAN CIVIL
LIBERTIES UNION
OF MARYLAND

3600 CLIPPER MILL
ROAD
SUITE 350
BALTIMORE, MD 21211
T/410-889-8555
F/410-366-7838

WWW.ACLU-MD.ORG

OFFICERS AND
DIRECTORS
HOMAYRA ZIAD
PRESIDENT

DANA VICKERS
SHELLEY
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

ANDREW FREEMAN
GENERAL COUNSEL

The ACLU of Maryland supports SB 322, which allows formerly incarcerated people to serve on juries. It is foundational to our judicial system that those accused of crimes be judged by a jury of their peers. Limiting that pool of peers based on a prior conviction for which a person has already served their time is an undue burden to civic participation and further enables bias in jury deliberations. SB 322 would enfranchise returning citizens and expand the pool from which we select people to serve their communities through jury service. All members of a community should have the opportunity to be included when deciding matters of justice.

Black communities, and therefore Black defendants, are disproportionately impacted by the current limitation. Black people are disproportionately represented in the prison system - 71% of Maryland's prison population is Black.¹ Those who have served their time and are returning to the community are barred from serving on juries, significantly shrinking the pool of "peers" Black defendants will be judged by. This current system allows for the underrepresentation of Black Marylanders on juries. These conditions create circumstances in which implicit bias can go unchecked within jury panels during deliberations and, ultimately, in verdict decisions. Black defendants are entitled to be judged by their peers, and SB 322 will allow for that to be the case in practice, not just in theory.

Civic participation, such as jury duty, is associated with lower recidivism rates and increased public safety, allowing returning citizens to practice pro-social behaviors and beliefs.² Investment in one's

¹ <https://www.sentencingproject.org/app/uploads/2022/08/The-Color-of-Justice-Racial-and-Ethnic-Disparity-in-State-Prisons.pdf>

² <https://www.sentencingproject.org/policy-brief/increasing-public-safety-by-restoring-voting-rights/>

community and the development of a positive self-image are key components of successful reentry.³

For the foregoing reasons, the ACLU of Maryland urges a favorable report on SB 322.

AMERICAN CIVIL
LIBERTIES UNION
FOUNDATION OF
MARYLAND

³ https://www.uscourts.gov/sites/default/files/68_2_4_0.pdf

SB 322 - LBCMD 2026 Priority Support Letter.pdf

Uploaded by: Ufuoma Agarin

Position: FAV



LEGISLATIVE BLACK CAUCUS OF MARYLAND, INC.

The Maryland House of Delegates, 6 Bladen Street, Room 300, Annapolis, Maryland 21401
410-841-3185 • 800-492-7122 Ext. 3185 • Black.Caucus@house.state.md.us

February 3, 2026

EXECUTIVE OFFICERS

Chair

Delegate Jheanelle Wilkins, District 20

1st Vice Chair

Delegate Melissa Wells, District 40

2nd Vice Chair

Delegate Karen R. Toles, District 25

Treasurer

Delegate Marlon Amprey, District 40

Secretary

Delegate Jamila J. Woods, District 26

Financial Secretary

Senator Arthur Ellis, District 28

Chaplain

Delegate Jeffrie E. Long, Jr., District 27B

Parliamentarian

Delegate Stephanie Smith, District 45

Historian

Delegate Cheryl E. Pasteur, District 11A

Executive Director

Ufuoma O. Agarin, J.D.

MEMBERS

Senator Malcolm Augustine, District 47
Senator Benjamin Brooks, District 10
Senator Nick Charles, District 25
Senator Antonio L. Hayes, District 40
Senator Shaneka Henson, District 30
Senator Carl Jackson, District 8
Senator Michael A. Jackson, District 27
Senator Cory V. McCray, District 45
Senator C. Anthony Muse, District 26
Senator William C. Smith, Jr., District 20
Senator Charles E. Sydnor III, Esq., District 44
Senator Alonzo T. Washington, District 22
Senator Mary L. Washington, District 43
Senator Ron Watson, District 23
Delegate Gabriel Acevero, District 39
Delegate Jacqueline T. Addison, District 45
Delegate Tiffany Alston, District 24
Delegate Vanessa E. Atterberry, District 13
Delegate J. Sandy Bartlett, District 32
Delegate Adrian Boato, District 23
Delegate Regina T. Boyce, District 43A
Delegate Frank M. Conway, Jr., District 40
Delegate Charlotte Crutchfield, District 19
Delegate Debra Davis, District 28
Delegate Diana M. Fennell, District 47A
Delegate Kevin M. Harris, District 27A
Delegate Andrea Fletcher Harrison, District 24
Delegate Terri L. Hill, District 12
Delegate Marvin E. Holmes, Jr., District 23
Delegate Julian Ivey, District 47A
Delegate Andre V. Johnson, Jr., District 34A
Delegate Adrienne A. Jones, District 10
Delegate Jazz Lewis, District 24
Delegate Robbyn Lewis, District 46
Delegate Ashanti Martinez, District 22
Delegate Alethaia McCaskill, District 44B
Delegate Bernice Mireku-North, District 14
Delegate LaToya Nkongolo, District 31
Delegate Edith J. Patterson, District 28
Delegate Joseline Peña-Melnik, District 21
Delegate N. Scott Phillips, District 10
Delegate Pamela Queen, District 14
Delegate Kent Roberson, District 25
Delegate Denise G. Roberts, District 25
Delegate Mike Rogers, District 32
Delegate Malcolm P. Ruff, District 41
Delegate Gary Simmons, District 12B
Delegate Deni Taveras, District 47B
Delegate Kym Taylor, District 23
Delegate Veronica Turner, District 26
Delegate Jennifer White Holland, District 10
Delegate Nicole A. Williams, District 22
Delegate C.T. Wilson, District 28
Delegate Greg Wims, District 39
Delegate Caylin Young, District 45

Chair William C. Smith, Jr.
Judicial Proceedings Committee
2 East Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Dear Chair Smith and Members of the Committee,

The Legislative Black Caucus of Maryland offers its strong and favorable support for Senate Bill 322 - Courts - Jury Service - Disqualification. The bill changes who is disqualified from jury service based on their criminal history and updates jury service regulation. Senate Bill 322 will provide individuals a second chance to participate in their civic duties, help reduce systemic bias, and strengthen public confidence in the jury system. **This bill is a 2026 legislative priority for the Black Caucus.**

The Legislative Black Caucus of Maryland believes that SB 322 will help remove outdated laws and avoid unnecessary barriers. Establishing a diverse jury pool will allow the justice system to move forward with fairness and effectiveness, due to having a better reflection of the communities and leading to decisions that the public is more likely to trust. Individuals will be able to participate in their civic duty and advance their legitimacy through different perspectives. A diverse jury that represents the community will be viewed as trustworthy, as through studies show that juries made up of diverse jurors can consider different viewpoints and analyze the case more effectively and with greater legitimacy than individuals of similar backgrounds. Senate Bill 322 would provide greater diversity and opportunities for those who have completed their time to bring their viewpoints and perspectives to decisions that may affect an individual's life.

Additionally, SB 322 supports convicted felons in receiving a second chance in society. Many small states exclude people from jury service who were once convicted of or are facing charges for both felonies and misdemeanors that are punishable by incarceration for a year or more. Maryland, which has the highest overrepresentation of Black people, has one of the most restrictive jury exclusion, with around 71% of the prison population compared to the 29% of the state population. The percentages show a disadvantage that the minority communities are faced with, as they often lack individuals who represent them and participate in decisions that affect another individual's life. Senate Bill 322 directly acknowledges that, as black Marylanders are immensely represented in the incarceration population, and recognizes that the current jury selection should reflect the individuals rather than exclude them. The bill promotes fairness, a fresh start, and restored trust in the justice system by allowing Marylanders to serve as jurors regardless of their history and better reflect the communities they represent.

For these reasons, the Legislative Black Caucus of Maryland strongly supports Senate Bill 322.

Legislative Black Caucus of Maryland

SB0322_FAV_OFJ.pdf

Uploaded by: Dwan Burton

Position: FWA



**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB0322:
Courts - Jury Service - Disqualification**

TO: Members of the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee

FROM: Dawn Burton, Deputy Director

DATE: February 3rd, 2026

Dear Members of the Committee,

I am Dwan Burton, deputy director of Out for Justice (OFJ), a Baltimore-based grassroots organization founded in 2011 and led by people directly impacted by the criminal legal system. We support Senate Bill 322 because it addresses a form of perpetual punishment that serves no public safety purpose: permanently excluding people from jury service after they have completed their sentence.

OFJ works with individuals who have met the system's requirements. They completed their sentences, complied with supervision, returned home, and rebuilt their lives. Yet under current law, many are still barred from one of the most basic forms of civic participation.

Senate Bill 322 makes a reasonable correction. It limits jury disqualification to people who are currently serving a sentence, including incarceration, probation, or parole. It also preserves exclusions for people with pending felony charges and for convictions that directly undermine the justice system, such as perjury, witness intimidation, or jury intimidation. This bill does not weaken the courts. It updates the law to reflect fairness and common sense.

Permanent jury exclusion does not make communities safer. It reinforces the idea that a conviction defines a person forever, regardless of what they do afterward. That approach undermines rehabilitation and deepens distrust in the justice system, especially in communities that are already heavily impacted by policing and incarceration.

Jury service is one of the few ways everyday people directly participate in the justice system. When jury pools systematically exclude people with lived experience of the system, juries become less representative, and verdicts feel less legitimate to the communities most affected by them.

Senate Bill 322 establishes that once the state has determined that someone has completed their sentence, there is no justification for continuing to deny them full civic participation. Reintegration only works when it is real, and civic inclusion is part of that process.

For these reasons, Out for Justice urges a favorable report. Thank you for your time and consideration.

SB322

Uploaded by: Rich Gibson

Position: UNF



SENATE BILL 0322

Courts - Jury Service – Disqualification

RICH GIBSON, HOWARD COUNTY STATE'S ATTORNEY

POSITION: UNFAVORABLE FOR SB 0322

February 2, 2026

My name is Rich Gibson, I am the State's Attorney for Howard County and the President of the Maryland State's Attorneys' Association (hereinafter MSA). I have been a prosecutor for approximately twenty years, and I am writing today to request an unfavorable report for Senate Bill 0322.

The goal when selecting a jury in a criminal trial is to find twelve completely neutral individuals who know nothing about the case, have no knowledge of the people involved in the case, and have no preconceived notions, feelings or ideas that might impact their ability to fairly administer the law as instructed to them by the presiding judge. The underlying premise of the criminal justice system is change. It is designed to alter (hopefully to rehabilitate) those individuals that are exposed to it. It would be difficult to argue that incarceration does not change the incarcerated. Change the way they think, the choices they make, and alter their world view.

Senate Bill 0322 seeks to modify the current law to allow those who have previously been incarcerated for a year or more to be members of the jury. However, this ignores the obvious--that people who have significant prior experience with criminal justice system are changed by it. That experience is part of who they are. This is not to say that is all that they are, but rather that experience has changed how they view the justice system and therefore would impact their ability to judge the case before the court in a vacuum. Separate from their prior experiences. As stated previously, the goal of the voir dire (jury selection) process is to find twelve individuals with no

prior experiences, thoughts, or beliefs that would impact their ability to fairly weigh the case in front of them.

Can a victim, the defendant, and their impacted families get a fair trial when the people assembled to reach the conclusion of guilt or innocence have themselves been incarcerated for the same or similar charges as the defendant now faces? If those jurors took the position, "I did my time so should they," doesn't that impact the defendant's ability to get a fair trial? Conversely, if they took the position that no one should be exposed to the jail/prison system, doesn't that impact on the State's ability to get a fair trial for the community?

For these reasons, I, and **the members of the Maryland State's Attorneys' Association respectfully request an unfavorable report for Senate Bill 0322.**

2026 We OPPOSE SB332-pdf.pdf

Uploaded by: Steven Lapham

Position: UNF

UNFAVORABLE



January 30, 2026

Senator Benjamin F. Kramer, Sponsor, Judicial Proceedings Committee

Dear Senator Kramer:

CHARM Maryland, in furtherance of our Vision and Mission, opposes

SB332 Master Insurance Deductible

SB332 is not in the best interest of homeowners living in condo associations because it increases their out-of-pocket expenses, goes down slippery slope of additional costs, and we don't support the state requiring any level of insurance.

CHARM Maryland is a civic advocacy organization, incorporated in the state of Maryland, dedicated to fighting for the rights and interests of individual homeowners who live in common ownership communities. Current Maryland law is tilted in the interest of Boards of Directors and their management companies. We hope to change that, with your help, by amending the laws of our state.

CHARM Maryland envisions a future where individual homeowners in common ownership communities can live without fear of their own association, which shall abide by the law; be transparent, accountable, and fair; and be welcoming to all residents.

CHARM Maryland seeks to advocate for any bill that would advance our Mission, to

- * End predatory practices of homeowner associations
- * Protect the civil rights and financial security of the individual homeowner; and/or
- * Strengthen the democratic aspects of elections and decision making in homeowner associations.

Please add this letter to the records of public comment about this bill, and kindly advise us of opportunities to provide testimony or otherwise support this bill.

Sincerely,

SSL

Steven Sellers Lapham, President, CHARM Maryland, Inc.

Common Ownership Community Homeowners Advocating for Reform (CHARM) in Maryland

EMAIL: charm.md.contact@gmail.com

WEBSITE: www.charm-md.org