

# **HB0194 - Incarcerated Individual Apprenticeship Pi**

Uploaded by: Anne Pack

Position: FAV



**PREPARE**  
PREpare for PARole and REentry

Anne Bocchini Pack  
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### **HB0194 - Incarcerated Individual Apprenticeship Pilot Program - FAVORABLE**

I have served as a member of several collaborative workgroups as an impacted individual alongside State and community partners researching how to connect Incarcerated Individuals (IIs) to stable, living wage work. Through this collaboration I've found that many of the resources to create a continuous path from training to apprenticeship to community employment already exist, they are just not effectively organized because they cut across several silos. HB0194 is a pilot program that would organize these existing resources with minimal fiscal impact, break the silos and maximize the benefit of occupational training behind the walls. Piloting in Baltimore would allow for program development in a job-rich environment to prepare for scaling into more rural regions of the state.

Currently, the Maryland Department of Labor Correctional Education (CE) provides a range of Occupational Programming in correctional facilities across Maryland. CE does a career assessment, helps the II choose the right program, and enrolls the II in job training, often with a real world certification at the end. When the II is within 18 months of release, they are able to participate in the Work Release program. It would make sense for them to be placed into a job in the field they trained for, but this is not what currently occurs. The Work Release program is conducted through DPSCS Case Management, who is tasked with placing everyone, not just CE graduates, therefore Work Release jobs tend to be unskilled work such as fast food and recycling labor that almost any II could do. The opportunity to connect CE graduates to the trade apprenticeships they trained for is missed.

Although Labor attempts to reconnect individuals to their trade after the fact through Transition Coordinators 9 months pre-release and Reentry Navigators in the community, it is often too late. Reentry is an overwhelming time with many competing priorities and it can be easier for the individual to remain in the job they have while they weather the storm. As more time passes between CE training and field entry, memories fade, certifications expire, and the individual is eventually no longer able to directly enter the field without refresher training and recertification. Thus our training investment is lost. HB0194 closes this gap by seizing the opportunity at the Work Release contact point to appropriately place the II into trade employment. They can then continue this job during reentry and begin tracking toward long-term career advancement. This is a far better outcome for a very small investment, and I urge a favorable report.

**PO Box 9738, Towson, MD 21284**

# HB194

Uploaded by: Dana Phillips

Position: FAV

WES MOORE  
*Governor*

ARUNA MILLER  
*Lieutenant Governor*



YAAKOV "JAKE" WEISSMANN  
*Acting Secretary*

MARC L. NICOLE  
*Deputy Secretary*

**TITLE: HB194 Incarcerated Job Training Act**

**DATE: March 26 2026**

**COMMITTEE: Judicial Proceedings Committee**

**POSITION: Letter of Information**

**SUMMARY OF BILL:** House Bill 194 establishes a three-year Incarcerated Individual Apprenticeship Pilot Program within the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services (DPSCS), in consultation with the Department of Labor, to provide incarcerated individuals at the Baltimore City Correctional Center the opportunity to serve as paid apprentices with state, local, or private employers. The program sunsets September 30, 2029.

**EXPLANATION:** DBM does not oppose the goals of this legislation but raises a few implementation questions that may warrant attention before the pilot launches.

To the extent the pilot places participants with state agencies, there may be conflicts with existing employment protocols and collective bargaining agreements that would need to be resolved prior to implementation. DBM recommends that DPSCS assess these issues during program development.

DBM also notes that the Division of Correction remains responsible for participant guarding, transport, and care. Agencies absorbing participants may face unbudgeted operational costs. Given projected general fund deficits in FY 2027 and beyond, DBM recommends that any future expansion be contingent on a cost assessment included in the required 2029 report.

**For additional information, contact Dana Phillips at  
(410) 260-6068 or [dana.phillips@maryland.gov](mailto:dana.phillips@maryland.gov)**

# **AMC Testimony for HB 194.pdf**

Uploaded by: Michele Kouadio

Position: FAV



**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*

Michele Kennedy-Kouadio  
Vice President, A Mother's Cry

*Jamesina Greene*

Jamesina Greene  
President and Founder, A Mother's Cry

# **Maryland Catholic Conference\_FAVHB194\_SENATE CROSS**

Uploaded by: Michelle Zelaya

Position: FAV



MARYLAND  
CATHOLIC  
CONFERENCE

March 26<sup>th</sup> 2026

HB194

**Incarcerated Job Training Act**  
**Judicial Proceedings Committee**  
**Position: Favorable**

The Maryland Catholic Conference offers this testimony in support of **House Bill 194**. **The Maryland** 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.

**House Bill 194** requires the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services to develop and offer apprenticeship programs in skilled trades for incarcerated individuals. The program aims to equip participants with marketable job skills and provide opportunities to earn wages that can support them and, when appropriate, their families. The bill also permits a portion of an individual's wages to be paid to dependents in financial need.

Access to vocational training is a key factor in reducing recidivism and improving economic stability after release. By offering apprenticeship opportunities, Maryland can better prepare incarcerated individuals for meaningful employment and successful reintegration into society. Allowing wages to be distributed to spouses, children, or dependents also helps families maintain stability during times of incarceration. This bill is not only practical but restorative—strengthening families, building stronger communities, and supporting long-term economic growth.

The Church teaches that every person is endowed with dignity and capable of transformation. Providing pathways to education and employment honors this dignity and reflects our belief in redemption and second chances. This legislation supports the common good by preparing individuals for productive futures, strengthening family bonds, and reducing cycles of poverty and incarceration. It aligns with the Gospel call to “visit the imprisoned” and help restore hope, opportunity, and human flourishing.

For these reasons, the Maryland Catholic Conference urges a favorable report on **House Bill 194**.

**HB0194-JPR-FAV.pdf**

Uploaded by: Nina Themelis

Position: FAV



BRANDON M. SCOTT  
MAYOR

*Office of Government Relations  
88 State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401*

**HB 0194**

March 26, 2026

**TO:** Members of the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee  
**FROM:** Nina Themelis, Director, Mayor's Office of Government Relations  
**RE:** House Bill 194 – Incarcerated Job Training Act

**POSITION: FAVORABLE**

Chair Smith, Vice Chair Waldstreicher, and Members of the Committee, please be advised that the Baltimore City Administration (BCA) **supports** House Bill (HB) 194.

HB 194 would establish a much-needed apprenticeship program for incarcerated individuals within the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services (DPSCS).

Approximately 2,000 Baltimoreans return from prison each year. According to the Justice Policy Institute, Baltimoreans are disproportionately impacted by mass incarceration – representing 40 percent of the state's prison population despite being home to just 9 percent of Maryland's overall population.<sup>1</sup>

The City of Baltimore previously implemented a pilot employment program for incarcerated Baltimoreans preparing to return home entitled Returning Citizens Behind the Wall (RCBTW) using \$986,400 of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds. This program connected eligible inmates with employment in partnership City agencies and various community-based re-entry organizations with meaningful \$15/hour employment, skills training, and wraparound supports ahead of their release from incarceration. This initiative supported 199 people preparing to return home to Baltimore. At time of release, 80 percent of participants received at least \$10,000 in accumulated wages to support them on the next phase of their journey.

With the end of this pilot program at the conclusion of ARPA funding, there is a clear opportunity for the State to step in and establish similar programming that connects people who are

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<sup>1</sup><https://justicepolicy.org/press/baltimore-city-black-communities-in-maryland-disproportionately-harmed-by-alarming-rates-of-incarceration/>

incarcerated with apprenticeship opportunities. Consistent with national models, Maryland's recidivism is highest in the first year following release. Measurement of first year recidivism changed due to pending resolution of cases, and is currently 19.44%. Pre-release employment and skills training is an essential part of ensuring people currently incarcerated in State facilities are able to successfully re-enter society. This proposal would help prevent recidivism, facilitate the development of in-demand trade skills, fill important roles in the job market and local government to grow our regional economy, and appropriately compensate participants for their labor. Simply put, when incarcerated individuals are able to return home with the skills they need to succeed and on solid financial footing, it will help drive down recidivism rates across Maryland.

For these reasons, the BCA respectfully requests a **favorable** report on HB 194.

# **Favorable - HB 194 - incarcerated apprenticeship p**

Uploaded by: Philip Caroom

Position: FAV

Favorable - HB 194 – Incarcerated Individual Apprenticeship Pilot Program

**MARYLAND ALLIANCE FOR JUSTICE REFORM**  
Working to end unnecessary incarceration and build strong, safe communities



TO: Chair Will Smith and Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee  
FROM: Phil Caroom, MAJR Executive Committee  
DATE: March 26, 2026

Maryland Alliance for Justice Reform (MAJR - [www.ma4jr.org](http://www.ma4jr.org)) urges support for HB 194, the Incarcerated Individual Apprenticeship Pilot Program, as an important initiative to provide much-needed job training and employment opportunities for Marylanders seeking to leave their past criminal involvement behind.

Why is employment important for incarcerated Marylanders? Studies show that employment reduces recidivism and, thus, promotes public safety. The U.S. Chamber of Commerce reports that “those who are unable to maintain employment experience a recidivism rate of 52% over three years, whereas their peers who maintain employment for one year post-release experienced a recidivism rate of just 16%.”

Employers also would benefit given our workforce reductions due to immigration enforcement.

Legislators should take note that this Apprenticeship program would not duplicate the function of Maryland Correctional Enterprises (MCE). The bill specifies that this program would not be part of MCE. Importantly, legislators also should recall that MCE is a small program – and offers employment training / work to only about 10% of all individuals incarcerated in Maryland’s Division of Correction.

So, other training and employment is needed by the remaining 90% of incarcerated Marylanders. MCE limits participation to just those incarcerated individuals who have GEDs or other diplomas. The Apprenticeship program doesn’t compel this restriction, so it potentially also might assist individuals who could learn and gain experience with less-skilled trades.

The proposed Apprenticeship pilot also would be located at the Baltimore City Correctional Center where the need for employment is especially high.

Finally, Legislators should note that the Apprenticeship program has been rated as having only a “minimal increase” in costs for state agencies that might choose to take on apprentices via this program.

While not a panacea, HB 194– the Incarcerated Individual Apprenticeship Pilot Program– is an excellent addition to our toolbelt for providing lawful employment to Marylanders seeking to leave criminal involvement behind.

*PLEASE NOTE: Phil Caroom files this testimony for MAJR and not for the Md. Judiciary or any other unit of state government.*

# **Testimony for House Bill 0194.pdf**

Uploaded by: Stephen Steurer

Position: FAV

**Testimony for House Bill 0194**  
**Incarcerated Individuals Apprenticeship Pilot Program**  
**Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee**

*By Stephen J. Steurer, PhD, Chair,*

*Prison Education Delivery System Commission*

*March 26, 2026*

Members of the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to be with you today. Please accept my wholehearted support for HB0194 sponsored by Delegate Metzgar and others. Currently, I am the Chair of the Governor's Prison Education Delivery System Reform Commission and have been working very closely with Delegate Metzgar on issues related to the education and workforce development of incarcerated individuals. Because the Commission has been advised by the Governor not to get directly involved with sponsoring bills, my testimony today does not represent the opinion of the Commission per se. In its first year, however, the Commission has created more than 15 recommendations to the Governor and Legislature, some of which are strongly reflected in HB0194.

My support is based on more than 50 years of service working in criminal justice as a high school teacher, correctional administrator in Maryland and the Federal Bureau of Prisons, executive director of a national correctional teacher association, researcher and professor in Maryland. In these roles, I have seen how effectively we can use education and workforce development to train and utilize incarcerated individuals to become productive workers, positively contributing citizens and supportive family members. Many of those who I met behind bars have been released and continued as productive crime-free citizens. Today we have five of those individuals serving on our Commission and workgroups. RAND Corporation research studies have overwhelmingly documented the cost-effectiveness and power of education and workforce development to positively change the lives of individuals and their families and, ultimately, their communities.

In summary, my professional experience and research have taught me the value of education and work skills in redeeming many people who otherwise would have continued as habitual criminals. I am proud to now work with many people who are now parents, productive members of their community, tax-paying citizens and personal friends. Please vote to support apprenticeship in House Bill 0194.

# **Testimony 0194.pdf**

Uploaded by: Veronica Jackson

Position: FAV



March 24, 2026

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing in strong support of the Incarcerated Individual Apprenticeship Pilot Program. This initiative represents a critical step toward meaningful rehabilitation, workforce development, and long-term public safety.

Far too often, individuals who are incarcerated face significant barriers upon reentry into society—particularly when it comes to employment. Without access to marketable skills, stable income opportunities, and structured career pathways, many returning citizens are left with limited options, increasing the likelihood of recidivism. This program directly addresses that gap by providing hands-on training, industry-recognized credentials, and real-world work experience.

Apprenticeship programs are proven to be one of the most effective workforce development strategies. By introducing these opportunities within correctional settings, participants can begin building a future before they are released. This not only restores dignity and purpose, but also allows individuals to contribute positively to their families and communities upon reentry.

In addition, this program benefits employers and the broader economy. Many industries are facing skilled labor shortages, and this initiative creates a pipeline of trained, motivated workers ready to fill those roles. It is a smart investment that strengthens both our workforce and our communities.

Most importantly, the Incarcerated Individual Apprenticeship Pilot Program affirms a belief in second chances. It recognizes that people are more than their past mistakes and that, with the right tools and opportunities, they can transform their lives.

I urge you to support and invest in this program. It is a forward-thinking solution that promotes rehabilitation, reduces recidivism, and builds stronger, safer communities for us all.

Sincerely,

*Veronica Jackson*

Veronica Jackson  
Executive Director

# **HB 194\_ Incarcerated Individual Apprenticeship Pi**

Uploaded by: Trudy Tibbals

Position: UNF

**HB 194:** Incarcerated Individual Apprenticeship Pilot Program: Please vote to **OPPOSE** this bill.

Dear Judicial Proceedings Committee:

I am writing as a concerned resident of Maryland, to urge you to **oppose House Bill 194**, the Incarcerated Individual Apprenticeship Pilot Program.

While the bill aims to provide paid apprenticeships in skilled trades to incarcerated individuals, initially focused on the Baltimore City Correctional Center, I believe it is misguided and sends the wrong message to law-abiding Marylanders.

My primary concerns include:

- **Prioritizing offenders over law-abiding citizens:** Maryland already faces a severe shortage of skilled trades workers. Apprenticeship opportunities and taxpayer-funded "...guarding, transporting, lodging, feeding, clothing, and medical and other care of an incarcerated individual while the incarcerated individual is participating in the Program..." **should first go to unemployed or underemployed residents who have not committed crimes, rather than giving preferential paid training to those currently incarcerated.**
- **Misplaced incentives:** Providing wages, formal apprenticeships, and credentials to prisoners while they are still serving time **rewards criminal behavior and undermines the deterrent effect of incarceration.** This could reduce the perceived consequences of crime at a time when public safety remains a top concern for many Maryland families.
- **Risk to public safety and program integrity:** Allowing incarcerated individuals to participate in structured paid work programs **raises serious questions about supervision, security, potential exploitation of labor, and whether participants will actually complete apprenticeships upon release.** Past correctional job-training efforts have shown mixed results in reducing recidivism, and this pilot risks becoming another unfunded or poorly overseen mandate.
- **Better alternatives exist:** Resources would be far more effective if directed toward expanding apprenticeship programs for at-risk youth, veterans, or displaced workers in the free community—people who are actively trying to build honest lives.

**HB 194** passed the House and is now before the Senate. I strongly encourage you to vote **NO** on this legislation and reject it in committee. **Maryland's limited workforce development dollars should support those who play by the rules, not those who have broken them.**

Thank you for your time and for prioritizing the interests of hardworking Maryland taxpayers and families. I respectfully request that you **oppose HB 194**.

Sincerely,

Trudy Tibbals

# **HB194\_MD Labor\_LOI\_Senate Hearing.pdf**

Uploaded by: Jenna Bachman

Position: INFO

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**MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF LABOR TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL 194**

**TO:** Government, Labor, and Elections Committee Members  
**FROM:** Maryland Department of Labor (MD Labor)  
**DATE:** March 26, 2026  
**BILL:** Incarcerated Job Training Act

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**MD LABOR POSITION: INFORMATION**

As amended, HB194 would establish an Incarcerated Individual Apprenticeship Program (“Program”) within the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services (DPSCS). DPSCS would be required to consult with the Maryland Department of Labor (MD Labor).

MD Labor’s Division of Workforce Development and Adult Learning (DWDAL) is the State Apprenticeship Agency and oversees Registered Apprenticeship (RA) in Maryland. All RA programs are approved by DWDAL’s Maryland Apprenticeship and Training Program (MATP)/the Maryland Apprenticeship and Training Council (MATC).

MD Labor’s Office of Correctional Education (OCE) Program works to provide academic, occupational, and transitional program support for incarcerated individuals (IIs) to prepare them for a positive transition and employment when they are released.

MD Labor staff from the above offices would be able to partner with DPSCS to implement this program with existing resources to ensure that IIs are properly trained for high-paying jobs that are in demand in Maryland.

The Department respectfully requests the Committee consider this information on HB194. For questions, please contact Andrew Fulginiti at [Andrew.Fulginiti@maryland.gov](mailto:Andrew.Fulginiti@maryland.gov).