



**Testimony in Support of HB 935 - Correctional Services - Comprehensive Rehabilitative
Prerelease Services - Female Incarcerated Individuals
Judiciary Committee Hearing Date: 3/3/26**

Dear Members of the House Judiciary Committee:

A Mother's Cry asks for a favorable vote for HB 935 and as sponsored by the Women's Pre-Release Equity Coalition (WPEC). The State of Maryland has spent 17 years NOT providing women with a community-based prerelease center to assist in their return to society from the women's state prison. The 2021 Gender-Responsive Prerelease Act required the state to build such a facility; it has failed to comply with the statute. Resources for women prisoners have always been incredibly lacking.

I am Vice President of A Mother's Cry and a member of the Women's Democratic Club (WDC) and am glad that WDC has been part of WPEC since 2019. With your help, we can pass revised legislation this year that will finally force the state to provide incarcerated women being released from prison the same opportunities as released incarcerated men are given. For the past few years, Governor Moore's Bureau of Public Works planned to have the Women's Pre-Release be built as part of the Baltimore Therapeutic Treatment Center (BTTC) in Baltimore. A Mother's Cry protested the building of the \$1.2 billion ill-conceived settlement of the long-standing Duvall case. The capital improvement program in 2025 showed 85% of expenditures for this BTTC, effectively squeezing out immediate financing for a Women's Pre-Release center and any funding to refurbish aging state prison facilities.

A Mother's Cry urges this legislature to support HB 935's passage to ensure that the Women's Pre-Release Center can be built now so women receive equitable services to prepare them effectively with tools and job training to support themselves and most often their children.

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