

HB 463: First Degree Murder - Diminution Credits - Prohibition: Please vote to **SUPPORT** this bill.

Dear Judiciary Committee:

I am writing to strongly urge you to **SUPPORT HB 463** during any further committee action, floor votes, or conference consideration.

HB 463 ensures that sentences imposed by judges for the most serious crime—premeditated murder—remain meaningful and are served in full, without automatic early release mechanisms.

First-degree murder represents the intentional, willful taking of human life, often with extreme cruelty or planning. **Allowing diminution credits for those convicted of this offense can undermine the gravity of the crime, reduce deterrence, and cause additional pain to victims' families who expect the full sentence to be enforced.** By eliminating these credits specifically for first-degree murder convictions, the bill aligns punishment more closely with the offense's severity, prioritizes public safety, and respects the judicial sentencing process.

This change does not eliminate incentives for good conduct entirely (as other mechanisms like parole review remain available in appropriate cases), but it appropriately reserves full sentence service for the gravest homicides. **Maryland should send a clear message that premeditated murder carries real, non-negotiable consequences.**

For these reasons, I respectfully ask you to **vote in favor of HB 463** and help ensure justice for victims and stronger public safety protections.

Thank you for your attention to this important criminal justice legislation.

Sincerely,

Trudy Tibbals