

***HB 0467 – Correctional Services – Maryland Parole Commission – Improvements in Transparency and Equity – Favorable - Feb. 27, 2026***

Dear Members of the Judiciary Committee:

I am a Parole Advocate and the former chair of the Maryland Equitable Justice Collaborative (MEJC) Decarceration and Parole Subcommittee. The recommendations of this Subcommittee comprised of representatives from the Parole Commission, Division of Parole and Probation, DPSCS Case Management, Social Work and Program and Reentry services, Victim Rights Advocates, relatives of incarcerated Marylanders, Family Support organizations, legal clinics, law professors and parole advocates are reflected in this proposed legislation. Improving parole as a means of decarceration was the goal of this group of diverse stakeholders. Many of whom have onboarded to the Sentencing and Parole Workgroup of the Maryland Justice Partnership since the sunset of MEJC.

“Transparency, Consistency, and Detailed Rationale for Parole Decisions” was among several reports submitted to the leaders of MEJC. It happened to be the only recommendation from the Decarceration and Parole Subcommittee included in the MEJC Breaking the 71%: A Path Towards Racial Equity in the Criminal Justice System. While “Recommendation 10” of the publication identified the problems, it did not include the recommended strategies to resolve the issues.

It is refreshing to see that HB467 includes those recommendations which I believe will improve the functioning of Maryland’s parole scheme. Thus, I urge this Honorable Committee to vote in favor of this vital piece of legislation.

Sincerely yours,

/s/Gordon R. Pack