



Testimony of American Association of University Women of Maryland

to the

**Maryland General Assembly
House of Delegates Judiciary Committee**

in support of

**House Bill 935: Correctional Services - Comprehensive Rehabilitative Prerelease Services - Female
Incarcerated Individuals**

February 27, 2026

Submitted by Roxann King, Public Policy, AAUW Maryland; President, AAUW Anne Arundel County
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The American Association of University Women of Maryland (AAUW Maryland) strongly supports 2026 HB 935. Founded in 1881, AAUW's approximately 70,000 members are leaders in gender equity research, advocacy, and education. In Maryland, our members and supporters, and college and university partners are strong advocates for laws that promote the education, equity, and the well-being of women and families.

In 2021, the Maryland General Assembly overrode the Governor's veto to pass the Gender-Responsive Pre-Release Act (the Act), which required the DPSCS: 1) to open and operate a pre-release center for women, 2) to do so in or adjacent to the zip code where most released women would be returning, and 3) to provide educational, occupational, parenting/family reunification, and therapeutic and substance use programming that is gender-responsive, trauma-informed and evidence-based. Citing unspecified delays, DPSCS has indicated that construction will not begin until FY2028 and the facility will not open until FY2030.

We are here because the site that was chosen would not accommodate the anticipated prerelease women. It does not meet the recommended site size, to accommodate safe parking and area for outdoor activities, anticipating family visitation. It is in a drug infested area, not suited for the women. The training classes were to be offered in the Baltimore Therapeutic and Treatment Center (BTTC), a "secure detention housing" facility designed to house 900, overwhelmingly male, residents, requiring the women to walk through the neighborhood to get to their counseling classes outside of their center.

The reason we are here this year is that we have lobbied last summer and fall to prevent construction from being approved and started on this building that would only lead to failure for the program. The building needs to be in a safe Baltimore neighborhood, close to jobs. It needs to accommodate the women in prelease. It needs to have adequate outdoor space for these women and their families. It needs to offer the women's counseling and training classes on the premises. Please insist by this bill that the prerelease women be accommodated in a way that sets them up for success.

**AAUW MD urges that you provide a favorable report on House Bill 935, Correctional Services -
Comprehensive Rehabilitative Prerelease Services - Female Incarcerated Individuals.**