



Maryland Crime Victims' Resource Center, Inc.

Continuing the Missions of the Stephanie Roper Committee and Foundation, Inc.

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RE: FAVORABLE TO HOUSE BILL 697

Dear Chair Bartlett and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the Maryland Crime Victims' Resource Center (MCVRC), I write in support of House Bill 697, which would prohibit diminution credits for individuals serving sentences for first-degree murder.

MCVRC works with homicide survivors across Maryland. For these families, the sentence imposed by the court represents one of the few assurances of accountability after an irreversible tragedy. When a sentence for first-degree murder is reduced through diminution credits, it undermines confidence in the justice system and retraumatizes survivors who believed the court's sentence reflected the full term to be served.

First-degree murder is the most serious offense under Maryland law. The sentence imposed should reflect the actual period of confinement, absent extraordinary judicial or executive relief. Maryland law already limits diminution credits for certain serious offenses; this bill appropriately applies that same principle to first-degree murder.

House Bill 697 promotes transparency, accountability, and truth in sentencing for the most severe crime recognized by our State. For these reasons, MCVRC respectfully urges a favorable report.

Respectfully submitted,

Joanna D. Mupanduki

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Deputy Director

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