

# MARYLAND ALLIANCE FOR JUSTICE REFORM

Working to end unnecessary incarceration and build strong, safe communities



21 February 2017

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House Economic Matters Committee  
Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee

Bill Numbers: HB440/SB055

## **Employers of Ex-Offenders - Liability for Negligent Hiring or Inadequate Supervision - Immunity**

Governor Larry Hogan announced on December 16, 2015 a multi-agency initiative, led by the Governor's Office of Crime Control & Prevention, to conduct an extensive review of the legal and regulatory barriers that individuals with a criminal record face when re-entering the community after time in prison. This initiative was spearheaded by Judge Alexander Williams, Jr., head of the **Collateral Consequences Workgroup**.

In addition to criminal penalties that may be imposed at sentencing, there are many legal and regulatory penalties, sanctions, and restrictions—commonly known as collateral consequences—that are distinct from the direct consequences imposed as part of the court's judgment at sentencing.

Submitting its final recommendations on December 31, 2016, the Workgroup emphasized that the State of Maryland encourage employers to assist our returning citizens gain steady and rewarding employment. Among its recommendations is:

### **Recommendation 8: Renew Maryland programming that protects private employers and encourages them to hire returning citizens.**

Effective public safety strategies not only include the pursuit, prosecution, and punishment of criminals, but it also includes finding jobs for citizens who have served their time and are returning to our communities.

Returning citizens who lack a clear path to gainful employment have higher chances for recidivism, and lean heavily on state resources.

The current legislation is an important step in providing the needed assurance to employers to take a limited risk in giving jobs to our returning citizens. We **support** this legislation and urge that this committee consider HB440/SB055 favorably.

Respectfully,

James Rose for the  
Maryland Alliance for Justice Reform (MAJR)