

MARYLAND ALLIANCE FOR JUSTICE REFORM

Working to end unnecessary incarceration and build strong, safe communities



The Justice Reinvestment Oversight Board has been appointed!

On December 20, 2016 **Governor Larry Hogan announced** Judge Daniel M. Long as chair of the Justice Reinvestment Oversight Board, a 25-member board that oversees the implementation of Maryland's comprehensive criminal justice reform law. The Justice Reinvestment Act (SB 1005), signed into law by Governor Hogan last May, established the Justice Reinvestment Oversight Board and charged its members with monitoring progress and compliance with the implementation of the law.



"I was proud to sign the Justice Reinvestment Act, which will help Maryland better protect our communities, restore families, and broaden economic opportunity for our citizens," said Governor Hogan. "Making these reforms a reality will be critical to our success in achieving better outcomes for public safety, the criminal justice process, and for Marylanders who deserve a second chance.

I am confident that the members of the board, led by Judge Long, will serve Maryland well in this capacity."

The Oversight Board will be advised by the Local Government Justice Reinvestment Commission and the Justice Reinvestment Advisory Board, both established by the legislation. It will meet quarterly as required by the Act and will collect and analyze data, create performance measures to track effectiveness, and make recommendations for the reinvestment of savings realized under the provisions of the Act. The board will hold its first meeting on January 4, 2017. MAJR will be there.

Hogan announces Justice Reinvestment Grants

To jumpstart the justice reinvestment reforms, Governor Hogan announced that, through



the 2016 Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant (BJAG) program, a sum of \$991,734 will go toward directly supporting Justice Reinvestment Initiatives throughout Maryland, including the funding of crime and recidivism prevention programs, treatment, and re-entry services.

The recipients of the BJAG awards—which are funded through the U.S. Department of Justice and administered by the Governor’s Office of Crime Control & Prevention—support a broad range of state and local criminal justice initiatives critical to Maryland’s ultimate goal of safe communities. Funds are intended to close gaps in services related to preventing violent crime, assisting crime victims, enforcement, prosecution, adjudication, detention, and rehabilitation.

To see which jurisdictions were awarded grants [click here](#).

A CALL TO CHANGE MARYLAND’S UNFAIR MONEY BAIL SYSTEM

Maryland holds more than 6,000 citizens daily in pretrial detention. The majority have not been convicted, were arrested for nonviolent offenses, and willingly would appear for their day in court. Some may have mental health problems, others may have had one drink too many, some may have forgotten an appointment with a probation officer, but all have this in common: they cannot afford to post a money bail bond to be released. They are kept in jail for one reason: poverty.

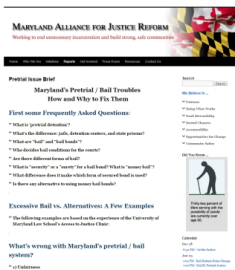


Maryland’s Attorney General questions the constitutionality of keeping citizens in jail just because they are poor. However, Maryland judges continue to set high money bail bonds that low-income individuals can’t pay. If defendants do post bond, the amount due to bail bondsmen can consume months of wages. They can’t get this money back, even when they appear for their trial dates or charges are dropped.

It doesn’t have to be this way.

Maryland Court of Appeals will consider a rule change that would ensure citizens of Maryland are not kept in jail only because they cannot afford bail. The court will hand down its decision on January 5th. Even with the rule there are legislative remedies which are essential to protect our communities and enable our justice system to operate equitably and efficiently.

Help us address these and other problems with Maryland's justice system. Read about



pretrial justice in MAJR's new **Issue Brief**. Sign **our petition** to support the 2017 Maryland Pretrial – Justice Reinvestment Act (PJRA) and other pretrial improvements to reduce unnecessary pretrial detention, increase public safety, support Maryland families, and reduce taxpayer costs.

Go to <http://www.ma4jr.org/petition/> and leave your name and address! MAJR will deliver all these petitions to your Delegate, to your Senator, and to Governor Hogan.



Justice Reinvestment Oversight Board
 Wednesday, January 4 at 2:30
 Joint Hearing Room
 Dept of Legislative Services
 90 State Circle
 Annapolis, MD 21401

MAJR General Meeting
 Wednesday, February 1 at 6:30 p.m.
Stony Run Friends Meeting
 5116 N. Charles St.
 Baltimore, MD 21210

MAJR is a nonpartisan association of over forty community organizations and churches with members in every part of the state, formed to support justice reinvestment. Individual supporters include judges, attorneys, corrections professionals, as well as returning citizens, victims, and service providers.

Help us by forwarding this newsletter to your community!

Visit: <http://www.ma4jr.org>

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