

# MARYLAND ALLIANCE FOR JUSTICE REFORM

Working together for a criminal justice system that serves our communities



Bill #2.0 – “Maryland Safer Communities Reinvestment Fund”: Using the federally endorsed method of a “Justice Reinvestment” budget, this bill would fund all other legislative initiatives below without raising taxes. Funds now used to operate state prison units, when these are closed or reduced in size, would be placed in a revolving fund and used for improved offender screening, re-entry services, job-training and diversion as funds are made available. (\*Two other recidivism-reduction measures would require little or no state funds.)

## FOUR MAJR PARTS FUNDED BY 2.0 AS REVENUE NEUTRAL – WITHOUT TAX INCREASES:

<p>#2.1-<u>“Full &amp; Fair Reimbursement for Local Detention”</u>- Funded by 2.0, County Detention Centers can assist State in early screening, re-entry &amp; pre-release services without current financial penalties.</p>	<p>Bill#2.2-<u>“Prisoners’ Employment and Rehabilitation Resources”</u>- Funded by 2.0, expands successful Correctional Enterprises prison job program, encourages new “social enterprise” employers, &amp; supports more job placements for departing inmates—thus, reducing repeat offenses.</p>	<p>Bill#2.4-<u>“Screening for Public Safety &amp; More Effective Corrections”</u>- Funded by 2.0, identifies &amp; targets services for each inmate based on factors otherwise likely to cause reoffending. Retrains existing staff to employ methods proven effective.</p>	<p>Bill#2.6-<u>“Safer Communities Conciliation Act”</u>-Funded by 2.0, expands successful juvenile mediation to youthful adult &amp; misdemeanor offenders; if offender successfully completes agreements (restitution, counseling, no new problems), charges would not be filed &amp; no criminal record would impact employment</p>
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## \*TWO MAJR PARTS REQUIRING MINIMAL OR NO FUNDING:

<p>Bill#2.5 Employment-related proposals--2.5A <u>“Second Chance Act”</u>- Championed by the Job Opportunity Task Force, this Act shields dismissed charges and various common misdemeanors of ex-offenders after 3 years, balancing the public’s need to know with ex-offenders’ employment needs. 2.5B <u>“Ex-Offenders’ Earned Opportunities for Employment Act”</u>-Based on the Uniform Laws Commission model, this bill identifies “collateral consequences” in MD law, due to criminal records and permits sentencing courts &amp; the Parole Commission to order part or full restoration of employment rights, licenses, etc., if no unreasonable risk to the safety or welfare of others exists. 2.5B also advises offenders of “collateral consequences” of conviction as part of a guilty plea and sentencing process; provides that judges &amp; Parole Commission may rescind some consequences; provides ex-offenders may earn expungement, shielded records, and “certificates of rehabilitation” for confirmed lawful behavior after # of years for certain categories of offenses.</p>	<p>Bill#2.3-<u>“Parole Incentive for Life”</u>- Developed by Maryland Restorative Justice Initiative, this bill provides that final decisions concerning offenders with life sentences <u>with possibility of parole</u> will be made by the Governor’s appointed Parole Commissioners, rather than requiring the Governor’s intervention and approval. Individual parole decisions will apply evidence-based principles, such as considering victim input and evaluating the offender’s record. This method would insulate a governor from possible “Willie Horton” anxiety. Offenders sentenced to <u>life without possibility of parole</u> will be unaffected.</p>
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