

MARYLAND ALLIANCE FOR JUSTICE REFORM

Working to end unnecessary incarceration and build strong, safe communities



The time to act is NOW! The Maryland Legislature will end its deliberations on April 11th - less than sixteen workdays from today! Your delegates and senator need to hear from you ASAP!

Who is my legislator?

Who are your delegates? How do I contact my legislators? Just enter your street address, and all will be revealed! <http://mdelect.net/> (Click on the names for contact information)

MAJR urgently needs YOU to contact your legislators in support of the following legislation.

SB 1005/HB 1312: Justice Reinvestment Act

Requiring the Division of Parole and Probation to conduct a risk and needs assessment on inmates and include the results in a case record; altering the manner in which diminution credits may be earned; authorizing the Division to develop and modify the conditions of probation or suspension of sentences for the purpose of imposing graduated sanctions; establishing the Justice Reinvestment Oversight Board and the Local Government Justice Reinvestment Commission. For more information see: <http://www.ma4jr.org/justice-reinvestment/>

SB 1006/HB 1313: Justice Reinvestment Act - Criminal Penalties

Repealing mandatory minimum sentences for offenses involving distribution of a controlled dangerous substance; and altering the maximum penalties for offenses involving distribution of a controlled dangerous substance. (MAJR is supportive of repealing the mandatory minimum sentences. MAJR opposes the

provision to increase the maximum penalty for second degree murder from 30 years to 40 years)

HB 716: Election Law - Voting by Felons at Polling Places - Prohibition

Requiring an applicant for voter registration to specify whether the applicant is a felon; requiring that specified information concerning voting by felons be provided to an applicant for voter registration; requiring an individual who is a felon to vote only by absentee ballot; prohibiting a felon from voting at a polling place; and limiting a provision of law allowing specified registered criminal offenders to enter onto school property for the purpose of voting only to registered offenders who are not felons. (MAJR is lobbying against the passage of this restrictive legislation)

HB 1195: Task Force to Reduce Recidivism and Reform Correctional Education

This legislation proposes to establish a special task force on correctional education. The Task Force shall study and make recommendations regarding (1) the adequacy of resources used in State correctional education, including State, local, and private funding; (2) the quality and effectiveness of current correctional education programs for adult and juvenile offenders, including the use of computers and technology; (3) the benefits of correctional education programs collaborating with institutions of higher education, businesses and the private sector, prison industries, and treatment programs; (4) the optimal system for State oversight and management of correctional education; and (5) the collection of data and outcome measures for participants in correctional education programs. For more information see <http://www.ma4jr.org/correctional-education/>

HB 1046: Criminal Procedure - Pretrial Release

Requiring a judicial officer to order the pretrial release of a person charged with a crime on personal recognizance, on nonfinancial conditions, or on execution of an unsecured appearance bond in an amount by the court under circumstances; requiring a judicial officer to order the pretrial release of a person subject to a condition or combination of conditions, under circumstances.

SB 531/HB 882: Inmates - Life Imprisonment - Parole Reform

Repealing provisions that provide that inmates serving a term of life imprisonment may be paroled only with the Governor's approval, subject to provisions; repealing provisions that require parole decisions to be transmitted to the Governor under circumstances; repealing provisions that authorize the Governor to disapprove parole decisions in a manner. For more information see <http://www.ma4jr.org/parole-incentive-for-life/>

SB 946/HB 1180: Correctional Services - Restrictive Housing - Report

Requiring the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services on or before October 1 each year to submit specified data to the Governor's Office of Crime Control and Prevention relating to the use of restrictive housing in correctional facilities; and requiring the Department to make the information submitted available on the Department's Web site. For more information see <http://www.ma4jr.org/solitary-tracking/>

SB 215: Criminal Procedure - Expungement - Nolle Prosequi

Nolle pros'd charges are eligible for expungement after three (3) years, or sooner if the petitioner waives their right to sue the arresting agency. SB 215 would repeal the provision requiring individuals to waive their right to sue if they want to expunge a nolle pros' charge immediately. (JOTF is urging the committee to amend the bill to ensure that the record is expunged, but retained in a secure area for three years.)

SB 328/HB 220: Criminal Procedure - Partial Expungement (Unit Rule Repeal)

Maryland's notorious "unit rule" states that if one charge within a unit is ineligible for expungement, then the case as a whole is ineligible for expungement. (A unit is defined as two or more charges, other than for a minor traffic violation, that arise from the same incident, transaction, or set of facts.) This means that acquittals and other favorable dispositions that are eligible for expungement become ineligible for expungement if a conviction is also contained within a unit. SB 328/HB 220 would allow persons to petition the courts to request the 'partial expungement' of charges within a unit that, otherwise, would be ineligible for expungement.

SB 741/HB 956: Criminal Procedure - Expungement

This legislation would allow for the expungement of "invalidated" warrants (warrants that were issued, but were revoked before being served on the person) and nonviolent misdemeanors after a ten (10) year waiting period. It would also prohibit an individual from filing an expungement petition before the completion of the probation.

SB 890 - Expungement - Misdemeanor Convictions

Currently, only nine (9) misdemeanor offenses (commonly called 'public nuisance crimes') are eligible for expungement (if convicted). SB 890 would expand expungement eligibility to nonviolent misdemeanor convictions, excluding certain offenses, after a ten (10) year waiting period. (JOTF is urging the committee to consider reducing the waiting period from ten to five years.)



It is important that your senators and delegates hear from YOU to urge their support for these important bills. Please call and/or email your legislators to urge a favorable vote on these bills. Caryn Aslan (York) of the Job Opportunities Task Force has drafted a **great sample letter** supporting the expungement legislation. Use that letter as a model or the brief sample below to make your position known!

Sample Letter to Support Justice Reinvestment in Maryland

Subject: 2016 Maryland Justice Reinvestment Act (HB 1312 / SB 1005)

Dear Delegate -[insert name]- / Senator -[insert name]-:

I contact you today, urging your support for the Justice Reinvestment Act- JRA (HB 1312 / SB 1005).

I know from my experiences in the community that Maryland does not provide enough funding for treatment of drug addicts and that we simply lock up too many young people who need treatment.

(Add an example or two here?)

JRA would save taxpayer funds by removing nonviolent offenders from our prisons and giving them the treatment they need to change. Thank you for supporting JRA!

Very truly,
[your name]
[your address]

Lobbying might seem a little intimidating, right? We get it. And we understand that it's a big ask – but it's that important. We're with you every step of the way! Read *Lobbying in Annapolis* prepared by Patience Schenck.
<http://www.ma4jr.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/Lobbying-in-Annapolis.pdf>

Help us by forwarding this newsletter to your community!

Stay in touch with MAJR! We will need your help for the 2016 legislative session in Annapolis!

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

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