

MARYLAND ALLIANCE FOR JUSTICE REFORM

Working to end unnecessary incarceration and build strong, safe communities



Justice Reinvestment – Breakfast Reception*
Wednesday March 30, 8:30-10am
West 1 Conference Room, Miller Senate Office Building
In support of the Justice Reinvestment Act: HB1312/SB1005

Invited Speakers:



Robert Ehrlich
Former Governor of Maryland
Honorary Chairman, Maryland Alliance for Justice Reform



Stuart O. Simms
Former Secretary, Maryland Dept. Public Safety & Correctional Services
Honorary Chairman, Maryland Alliance for Justice Reform

Hosted by:



Senator Michael J. Hough
Judicial Proceedings Committee



Senator Thomas V. Mike Miller, Jr.
President of the Senate



Delegate Kathy Szeliga
Minority Whip, Legislative Policy Committee



Delegate Kathleen M. Dumais
Vice Chair, Judiciary Committee

Justice Reinvestment in Maryland:

"Justice Reinvestment" is a "smart-on-crime" plan to simultaneously reduce the prison population, save taxpayer funds, and reinvest these funds in programs proven to prevent crime or reduce repeat offenses. Through a public-private partnership supported by Pew Trusts and the federal government, it supports states in reviewing their existing correctional systems and identifying ways to improve them.

*Coffee and bagels will be provided

Justice Reinvestment in Maryland: An Overview of HB 1312/SB1005 (2016)

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improve them. (For further information, see rightoncrime.com, alec.org, and pewtrusts.org.)

In 2015, Maryland took an important first step towards Justice Reinvestment with SB602 ¹, creating the **Maryland Justice Reinvestment Coordinating Council (JRCC)** and joining 26 other states that have engaged in this approach to examine and improve their correctional systems.

KEY FINDINGS OF THE JRCC

As required by SB602, the JRCC used a “data-driven approach to develop a statewide framework of sentencing and corrections policies to...reduce the state’s incarcerated population, reduce spending on corrections, and reinvest in strategies to increase public safety and reduce recidivism.” In addition to data review and guidance through the Pew Institute, the JRCC held four stakeholder meetings at different Maryland locations (see [summaries on MA4JR.org](http://MA4JR.org)).

Based on months of public meetings, hearing from victims, corrections experts, organizations and citizens from around the state, JRCC concluded its first year’s study in December 2015 and published its 33-page **final report** recommending legislation—the Justice Reinvestment Act (JRA) to improve Maryland corrections. View the complete report at:

<http://goccp.maryland.gov/jrcc/documents/jrcc-final-report.pdf> The JRCC highlighted **these striking findings**:

- The average sentence length for Maryland prisoners increased 23% in the past 10 years, even as the prison population began a slight decline from historic high levels.
- Maryland incarcerates a higher percentage of our offender population than other states. Of these, 58% are held for nonviolent offenses. Also noteworthy is that 60% of parole and probation violators are sent to prison due to “technical” violations of parole rather than for new offenses.
- Reliable studies show Maryland’s “recidivism”² or re-offense rates—and taxpayer costs—could be cut substantially if more funds were spent on rehabilitation and less on longer sentences. Also, best practices suggest that more rehabilitation services should be targeted on “mid and high-risk offenders,” not “low-risk” offenders.

MAJR’s VIEW

Maryland Alliance for Justice Reform’s (MAJR) played a central 2015 role in advocating and supporting efforts to pass the Justice Reinvestment initiative in Maryland. While the 2016 JRA bill is not perfect from MAJR’s viewpoint, **its many important reforms could reduce Maryland’s prison population by 16% and save \$270 million within 10 years.**

By reinvesting those funds in alternatives to incarceration, our state's crime rate also could be reduced, taxpayer funds could be saved, and communities and families could be strengthened. **For all these reasons, MAJR strongly recommends support and passage of the 2016 Maryland Justice Reinvestment Act.** Together, we can work to fill policy gaps and make further improvements through supplemental policy initiatives and legislation in future years.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

See MAJR's website for more extensive explanations and research that supports the Justice Reinvestment practices and provisions: www.ma4jr.org Note: To access all the links in this document and to read the detailed analysis of the Justice Reinvestment Act, go to: <http://www.ma4jr.org/justice-reinvestment/>

MAJR is a nonpartisan association of over thirty 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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