

## MARYLAND ALLIANCE FOR JUSTICE REFORM

Working to end unnecessary incarceration and build strong, safe communities



# Pretrial Mental Health Screening and Services



The [National Alliance on Mental Illness \(NAMI\)](#) and [MAJR](#) hosted a [focus group meeting](#) in December. Maryland jail wardens and national studies agree that more mentally ill persons are in our jails and prisons than in psychiatric hospitals. Wardens also complain of insufficient resources for both community-based, in-jail, and post-release treatment.

Considering the inconsistencies among Maryland counties and the lack of treatment resources in most Maryland counties, MAJR, NAMI, and the full focus group agreed to recommend that the State should adopt the following plan:

1. Beginning in 2019 initiate uniform mental health screening of Marylanders held in pretrial detention based on established best practices.
2. Beginning in 2020 compile and analyze annual screening results in order to target resources efficiently to meet Marylanders' needs for further mental assessments and services, as well as funding, staffing and other steps needed in light of counties' unequal resources.

See our [Issue Brief](#) on this initiative.

A bill to implement the Focus Group proposals has been filed (no number yet) and will be scheduled for committee hearings soon. To receive more information so you can help us with this initiative contact us at [frontdoor@ma4jr.org](mailto:frontdoor@ma4jr.org)

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## School-to-Prison Pipeline

The Kirwan Commission (*Commission on Innovation and Excellence in Education*) has completed its policy recommendations and costing them out. Their enactment and implementation would be a major step toward shutting down the school to prison pipeline. The Commission has recommended four priorities for the 2019 session which include significant changes in early childhood education, changes in compensation, standards, and the professional standing of teachers and school leaders.



There has been a widespread misunderstanding that the Kirwan work was delayed for a year. Not so! The only thing being delayed is the formula that will determine what proportion of state money each local jurisdiction will receive and how much each local jurisdiction will have to pay.

The Maryland Commission on the School-to-Prison Pipeline and Restorative Practices has **released its final report**, and supports the Kirwan commission's four objectives.

See the **MAJR issue brief** on this initiative, and read more about the Kirwan plan **as reported in the Baltimore Sun**.

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Please join **Interfaith Action for Human Rights (IAHR)** in the **Campaign to End Prolonged Solitary Confinement**.

**Date: Wednesday, February 6**

**Location: House Building, Room 142**

(Anne Arundel County Delegation Room),  
6 Bladen Street, Annapolis 21401

**Time: 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.**

**Legislation: Three bills** (but no official numbers yet):

- **Bill #1:** to ban direct release from solitary to the public (with some exceptions, especially for the health of the inmate), sponsored by Senator Will Smith and Delegate Jazz Lewis.
- **Bill #2:** to limit the number of consecutive days in a given year that an inmate may be held (15 days is the recommendation from research and Corrections guidelines), sponsored by Senator Will Smith and Delegate Jazz Lewis.
- **Bill #3:** In collaboration with **Reproductive Justice Inside (RJI)**, a ban on involuntary medical isolation of pregnant and postpartum incarcerated women.

**[Click Here to Register](#)**

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MAJR is a nonpartisan association of over fifty 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.

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