

SUPPORT SB 419- Women's Prerelease

MARYLAND ALLIANCE FOR JUSTICE REFORM

Working to end unnecessary incarceration and build strong, safe communities



TO: Chair Bobby Zirkin and Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee
FROM: Phil Caroom, MAJR Executive Committee
DATE: February 21, 2019

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Maryland Alliance for Justice Reform (MAJR) supports SB419 to restore Women's Prerelease operations - preferably in the City of Baltimore.

The prior women's prerelease program, discontinued in FY17 offered the majority of women inmates who come from Baltimore various advantages including:

- 1) The opportunity to obtain meaningful employment which they could continue upon release;
- 2) The opportunity to reach such employment via public transportation;
- 3) The opportunity to have visits and to restore their relationship with family members from whom they may have become estranged during years of incarceration away from their home communities; and
- 4) The opportunity to establish better connections with local treatment providers as needed to succeed in reentry, post-release.

Studies show that more effective pre-release programs may reduce the rate of recidivism and, thus, benefit the public by reducing costs of further incarceration and crime. See, e.g., How Prerelease Can Make a Difference - <https://www.socialsolutions.com/blog/pre-release-center-makes-difference/>

DOC inmates, who are male, have the opportunity to be assigned to six different prerelease programs in various parts of the State - ideally, closer to their home communities. Budget constraints should not operate unfairly to penalize women.

For all these reasons, MAJR strongly urges adoption of SB 419.

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NOTE: Phil Caroom offer this testimony on behalf of the Maryland Alliance for Justice Reform executive committee and not on behalf of the Maryland Judiciary.