
MARYLAND ALLIANCE FOR JUSTICE REFORM

Working to end unnecessary incarceration and build strong, safe communities



Backdoor July 23, 2020 Meeting Minutes

Call to Order

The Backdoor workgroup meeting came to order on Thursday, July 23, 2020, at 7:00 pm with members of the Maryland Alliance for Justice Reform (MAJR) via ZOOM virtual meeting. The meeting began with introductions, roll call, and a welcome to new members. We were joined by Joe Meyerhoff, a guest speaker from Baltimore Reentry Resources, Inc. Dr. Francis was facilitating and recording minutes.

Roll Call

Present at the meeting were: Crystal, Phil, Olinda, Darrell, Brenda, Milt, Lawrence, Donna, John, Judith, Becca, Charlie, Carol, Mia, Lynette, Anita, Ed, Perry, Linda, Angela. (Additional people joined by phone, but the name was not recorded if not displayed on Zoom). Mr. Meyerhoff was a guest speaker.

Reentry Updates & Announcement

New Reentry Resource Website

Last year Backdoor convened a statewide reentry roundtable with 122 stakeholders in an effort to create a path for seamless reentry. In attendance was Mr. Meyerhoff who took information back to the Baltimore Reentry Resource, Inc. The organization launched the following website www.returnhome.org in July and demoed the features during the meeting. Returnhome.org helps individual in the Baltimore Metropolitan area find the resource and supports they need during their reentry transition. The site may be necessarily accessible to people “behind the walls”, but will be marketed and publicized so that families, friends, churches, can inform those inside and use the site on their behalf.

Backdoor members provided feedback on features they would like to see available in the future, such as:

- Connections to mentoring groups
- Register to vote button
- Help with child support and fees

Old Business

2020 Backdoor Legislative Report Card

Crystal and Phil gave an overview of the legislative report card for last session’s Backdoor initiatives. In brief the following legislative items that Backdoor supported were vetoed by the Governor Hogan:

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- **Kirwan Commission** (Overview: <https://www.mabe.org/adequacy-funding/>)
- **Women's Prerelease** (Factsheet: https://gallery.mailchimp.com/41429e61f7520af42e24f6fb0/files/943f4c94-a53c-43e7-8181-fb36a358a224/Women_s_Prelease_Fact_Sheet_For_Legislators_Public.pdf?fbclid=IwAR2kqfEmxkgfBQIj4-FqCnCTcCMXuBoUzGex02TX0qszUERydcVH1AA_A84)
- **Automatic Expungement** (testimony submitted: <https://www.ma4jr.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/suphb83.pdf>)
- **Partial Expungement** (testimony submitted: <https://www.ma4jr.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/supHB1336.pdf>)

* For a full list of MAJR's legislative report card visit <https://www.ma4jr.org/legislation-2020/>.

Statewide Reentry Council

A second goal that emerged from the Reentry Roundtable was the need to develop a Statewide Reentry Council. Last fall, the DPSCS Assistant Secretary was tasked with researching, developing, and forming the council. However, after multiple follow up requests the council was never developed. As a result, Backdoor will introduce legislation in 2021 to establish a statewide Reentry Council. A draft of the bill will be reviewed at the next workgroup meeting.

New Business

2021 Legislative Agenda Brainstorm Session

Backdoor workgroup members shared insights on what initiatives that would like MAJR to consider developing and supporting year:

1. Statewide Reentry Council Legislation
2. Automatic Record Expungement (Continue to support Job Opportunity Task Force's efforts)
3. Women's Prerelease Center (Continue to support Out for Justice's efforts)
4. Free community college for returning citizens (potential partnership between community colleges and office of probation and parole)
5. Reducing the impact of collateral consequence (Fee reductions-inability to pay child support, and related community supervision or restitution fees; curfews and mandatory check-ins that conflict with work schedules)
6. Incentivizing probation/parole (set clear benchmarks for reducing time on p/p)
7. Access to mentors and community navigators
8. More reliable housing options, and financial support while seeking employment (securing deposits, vouchers)

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Next Steps:

Backdoor workgroup members who are interested in contributing to the topics above will volunteer to issue briefs, draft legislative bills, and help find or identify legislative sponsor to support the legislative efforts we will lead. Leads and co-leads will volunteer to flesh out the ideas listed above. During the next meeting we will assign leads, co-leads, and contributors for the items above.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:10 pm. The next meeting will take place on Thursday, August 27, 2020, at 7:00 pm via Zoom. The meeting link will be provided in an email and also posted to the calendar on www.ma4jr.org