

MARYLAND ALLIANCE FOR JUSTICE REFORM

Working to end unnecessary incarceration and build strong, safe communities



Lobbying during this Pandemic

MAJR has developed [a guide for you](#) about lobbying during this pandemic. A few key points:

1. We're all participants in a work-in-progress.
2. In general your contacts should follow the pattern of traditional constituent office visits.
3. Time your visit, if possible, within a day or two before a vote on the bill(s) that you care about.
4. Include a personal anecdote.
5. Take time to understand the legislators reservations, if any.
6. Feel good about this!



LOBBYING

[Read the short guide here.](#)

"In the end, we will remember not the words of our enemies, but the silence of our friends." Martin Luther King, Jr.

Call Today!

We urge you to contact the leaders of the House Judiciary Committee who will be considering several important bills **next week**: Monday January 18 through Thursday, January 21.

- **Luke Clippenger** luke.clippinger@house.state.md.us Phone 410-841-3488
- **Vanessa Atterbeary** Vanessa.Atterbeary@house.state.md.us Phone 410-841-3471

And here is a link to all the members of the [House Judiciary Committee](#). If you know your representative is there, make that call too: [House Judiciary](#).

Here are brief elevator speeches for you to use in your next legislative phone call or email.

Support HB003 - Remove Governor from Parole Process

Hearing: Monday 1/18

Maryland law provides two types of life sentences – those eligible for parole and those without the possibility of parole. However, some Governors have eliminated this distinction by automatically vetoing parole for every life-sentenced inmate – even those eligible for parole. This includes model inmates recommended for parole by the Maryland Parole Commission!

Besides ignoring the law, such action removes the incentive for inmates with life sentences to live with hope, to be model prisoners, and to support younger inmates to do the same. Maryland continues to be one of only three States to allow the governor to wield such power.

Along with MAJR, I appeal to you to support HB003 to remove the Governor from the parole process and to restore the authority of the professional Parole Commission.

Support HB089 - Diminution Credits

Hearing: Monday 1/18

This legislation is designed to restore an incentive — 90 days credit — for Maryland prison inmates who achieve meaningful education (GEDs, AAs, college degrees) and valuable vocational certificates.

*Research shows that correctional education not only significantly reduces recidivism, but also returns five times the amount of money invested. In simple terms **RAND concluded** that for every \$1 spent on correctional education \$5 is saved on future expenses for corrections.*

To reduce recidivism and cut down on crime, to restore the value of education, to improve opportunities for gainful employment after release, we urge you to support HB089.

Support HB385/HB409 - Felony Murder

Hearing: Thursday 1/21

Maryland Alliance for Justice Reform (ma4jr.org) supports modification of Maryland's felony murder rule, particularly HB 385 that would repeal the legal fiction which unjustly incarcerates so many who have become involved as juveniles at a time when their mental maturity is incomplete.

Can people be found guilty of murder and sentenced to life in prison if the Court knows they didn't kill anyone? In Maryland, the answer is yes because of our State's legal-fiction known as the "felony-murder rule." Our legislature can act this year to limit this distortion of criminal justice.

I am asking for your support of HB385 and HB409 that limits the application of first degree murder.

To learn more about MAJR's Legislative Agenda for 2021, [click here](#)

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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