



## Maryland Alliance for Justice Reform

Dear Delegate

I am writing you not only as my representative in Annapolis, but also as someone who is as concerned about our criminal justice system as I am.

An important piece of legislation is coming up for review by the Judiciary Committee on Tuesday next week. House Bill 445 expands use of citations for simple possession of drugs to avoid arrest when these are unnecessary. Police officers still would have discretion to arrest, if necessary, for cases that involve overdoses, other threats to public safety, or known risks to abscond.

The American Bar Association estimates that over 75% of all held in pretrial detention are for drug possession or other nonviolent offenses. And the FBI reports, nationwide, that 86.4% of all drug arrests are for simple possession. If we want to make a significant change in Maryland's mass incarceration, this action will be an important start.

This legislation has been introduced, discussed, and approved for the last four years. The bill is not opposed by the Maryland Chiefs and Sheriff's Association. Nationally other law enforcement organizations affirmatively support expanded citation use.

More information can be read at: <https://www.ma4jr.org/citations/>

As your constituent working with the Maryland Alliance for Justice Reform, I earnestly ask you to support this legislation. Maryland needs your vote on Tuesday.

Sincerely,