



Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services

Office of the Secretary Office of Legislative Affairs

45 Calvert Street, Suite B7A-C, Annapolis MD 21401
410-260-6070 • Fax: 410-974-2586 • www.dpssc.state.md.us

STATE OF MARYLAND

LAWRENCE J. HOGAN, JR.
GOVERNOR

BILL: HOUSE BILL 608

BOYD K. RUTHERFORD
LT. GOVERNOR

POSITION: LETTER OF INFORMATION

ROBERT L. GREEN
SECRETARY

COMMENTS: This bill would require the Department's Division of Corrections operate a pre-release unit for women and provide quality programs and services.

RACHEL SESSA
CHIEF OF STAFF

CHRISTOHER McCULLY
DEPUTY SECRETARY
ADMINISTRATION

J. MICHAEL ZEIGLER
DEPUTY SECRETARY
OPERATIONS

CAROLYN J. SCRUGGS
ASSISTANT SECRETARY

GARY McLHINNEY
ASSISTANT SECRETARY

CATHERINE KAHL
ACTING DIRECTOR

- The Department's Division of Correction operates approximately 17 State correctional facilities, which house offenders sentenced to incarceration for 18 months and longer. The Department also runs the Baltimore City Jail, which houses pretrial detainees and inmates sentenced to incarceration for 18 months and less.
- The Department once operated the Baltimore Pre-release Unit for Women (BPRUW), which was a facility that housed minimum security and pre-release female inmates. The building was closed and the property transferred to the Maryland Department of Transportation in November 2009.
- Upon the closing of BPRUW, the female inmates were transferred to the Maryland Correctional Institution for Women (MCIW) where a wide range of pre-release programs and quality services are provided, including substance abuse programs.
- The Department has announced its plan to redeploy Brockbridge Correctional Facility as a comprehensive prerelease, reentry and workforce development facility for women and men. The facility will be fully dedicated to reentry programming, continued workforce development, education, work release, family mediation, and other essential programming allowing the department to create additional bridges of connection and expand on our already existing pre-release and reentry facilities across the state.
- The facility will serve women and men who are within 18 months of final release and appropriately classified to live in a minimum-security, pre-release environment. DPSCS will deploy direct supervision concepts that have proven highly successful and efficient in today's corrections and community corrections facilities, and will be designed to accommodate community programs that collaboratively align with the Department's strong re-entry focus.

- The overall sentenced population has gone down 20% over the past five years, and the population of sentenced women has decreased 10% over the past five years. In FY 2019, the sentenced population for women was 825. Additionally, in FY 2019, the pretrial population in totaled 2,301 of which 160 were female offenders.
- In terms of cost, the rehabilitation of Brockbridge is being completed with existing resources. No dedicated funding has been provided in the capital budget for this project.
- HB 608 will require the Department operate a community-based correctional facility dedicated to prerelease female inmates. This will have a significant fiscal and operational impact on the Department. It would require the Department to reacquire the BPRUW building and make extensive renovations to the existing structure. The building would need to be brought up to all the current building codes, life safety codes and energy codes, and require substantial renovations, including hazardous material abatement and meeting the current American Correctional Association standards.
- **To construct a prerelease unit dedicated to female inmates to include administration, adequate housing, reentry programming and education space, medical, dental, mental and behavioral health treatment services, recreation, and dietary services, would cost the Division an estimated \$93,000,000.00 in capital construction costs and staffing.**

CONCLUSION: For these reasons, the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services respectfully requests the Committee consider this information as it deliberates on House Bill 608.