



January 24, 2021

To: Maryland General Assembly:

We would like to introduce to you a newly established nonprofit organization **No Struggle No Success, Inc. (NSNS)**. Our headquarters is in Maryland's 7th congressional district. NSNS is the only reentry program in the State of Maryland that is designed from the successfully released returning citizens of *Ungers vs Maryland*. We have formed unique programmatic services of health education, substance abuse, identification management, housing, transportation, education, career/entrepreneurial development, gang/grief counseling and financial literacy all on-site to be the most effective. Each year our organization will provide these critical services for 220 diverse men, women, and youth in Baltimore, Maryland. NSNS has evidence-based approach, professional expertise, and personal testimonies to implement a robust program and demonstrate how these centralized services will truly impact the lives of program participants. In addition, we purposefully connect with leaders at a state and city level, where we advocate on behalf of the communities. We serve to create bold solutions to assist with reducing mass incarceration and to speak up regarding the gaps within the legal and criminal system.

We are in full support of the legislative bill HB0413-Implicit Bias Testing, Training and Evaluation. The consideration of this bill is critical, as each human facing criminal charges should receive a fair trial and sentencing. To effectively perform the duties assigned as a judge, he/she must stay up to date with trainings and be periodically evaluated to steer their judgement to lawfully provide justice. This safeguards all decision making with cases and appropriate sentencing. The State of Maryland has multiple sectors both public and private, where periodically a training and/or an assessment is required to promote professional development, remain in compliance with the state/federal guidelines. This includes sustaining education to stay inform with populations served to bring integral to the judiciary mission. Its very discouraging to know that some judges are making decisions with the systematic bias. Examples of such bias includes horn effect (negative trait), gender, social class, and age. It happens everywhere, but the State of Maryland must do better with assessing which biases are affecting the alleged individuals facing prison time and holding accountable those individuals responsible to miscarriage of justice.

We ask for MGA to allow this specific bill to pass to become proactive in a process that helps reduce bias impact on judge's decision making. The only reprimand given when a judge shows bias, is that recuse themselves from the trial or case. How does recusing themselves protect others from the bias of that judge or other judges who are not called out? Judges are imperfect individuals and although we highly respect their position, we also very much recommend that judges received trainings and evaluations that brings forth ethic morals and values of the judiciary system. By providing a way to identify patterns and monitor ways to watch for patterns of bias and using the legislative bill HB0413 to intervene.



Our organization mission: To remove all obstacles and excuses from returning to prison. Delivering readily available resources to change the justifications that leads to using illegal “street” alternatives. The Vision: Bridging the gaps of Freedom, Family and Finance. The success of an individual, safety of self and others and build family unity with generational wealth. We are in full support of Delegate Wells to remove the bias approach from judges. This is detrimental to judiciary systems and rights of humans, to ensure unconscious biases do not affect a judge decision. Our community depends on our organization for ways to lessen crime, reduce incarceration and improve safer neighborhoods in the undeserved population and to build a health and positive approach on life those with have returned to the community and their families.

Thank you for your consideration and time reviewing No Struggle No Success, Inc testimony for Maryland General Assembly 2021. We wish for each of you to be safe and healthy.

Sincerely,
Janette Graham
President