

Data on Jobs and Cost-Of-Living of Incarcerated Marylanders Is Key For Policy Reform

Position Statement Supporting Senate Bill 277

Given before the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee

The reintegration of people leaving incarceration into their communities, particularly juveniles, can be filled with difficulties. Those who have little to no wrap-around services upon reintegrating face tremendous obstacles getting adequate support. Research shows that recidivism rate for youth can exceed 76% in certain cases¹. **The Maryland Center on Economic Policy supports Senate Bill 277 because requiring that the Division of Corrections, among other agencies, to provide data for the Maryland Longitudinal Data Center research initiative can give insight into the ways our educational, welfare, and corrections systems can be improved.**

Tracking incarceration and recidivism rates, along with several other metrics from the Division of Corrections, the Department of Labor, and the Maryland State Department of Education can provide a holistic view into the experiences of returning citizens, particularly juveniles, with state programs. Metrics such as student data, child and family welfare services, and workforce data can enhance this understanding. Furthermore, this data will provide lawmakers and the public with the information needed to evaluate the state's current policies. This information could inform the development of more equitable policies and set up formerly incarcerated people for greater success up returning to their communities.

Lastly, members of the public join the Center's Governing Board will help ensure that directly affected communities can provide their input.

For these reasons, the Maryland Center on Economic Policy respectfully requests the Judicial Proceedings Committee to make a favorable report on Senate Bill 277.

Equity Impact Analysis: Senate Bill 277

Bill Summary

Requires the Division of Corrections, among other agencies and institutions, to provide data to the Maryland Longitudinal Data System Center for the purposes for researching education and workforce development outcomes for incarcerated and returning citizens.

Background

This bill intends to track incarceration and recidivism outcomes, among other social metrics, to increase the efficacy of the treatment, management, and rehabilitation of inmates confined in correctional facilities.

Equity Implications

- Our state’s reliance on incarceration has put too many Marylanders of every racial and ethnic background behind bars and disrupted communities in every part of our state. At the same time, these harms fall far more heavily on some than on others. For example:
 - 7 out of 10 Marylanders incarcerated in state prisons are Black, compared to three out of 10 Marylanders overall.
 - Marylanders who identify themselves as American Indian/Alaska native constitute 0.24 percent of our state’s total population, but 0.52 percent of Marylanders in state prison.
- The lack of rehabilitation and welfare programs lead to high recidivism rates, particularly youth who, in some cases, see a 76% recidivism rate.

Impact

Senate Bill 277 will likely **improve racial and economic equity** in the state by providing the data needed to inform more effective policies.

ⁱ <https://stacks.cdc.gov/view/cdc/23501>