



# LEGISLATIVE BLACK CAUCUS OF MARYLAND, INC.

The Maryland House of Delegates, 6 Bladen Street, Room 300, Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
410-841-3557 • 301-858-3557 • 800-492-7122 Ext. 3557 • Fax 410-841-3498 • 301-858-3498 • Black.Caucus@house.state.md.us

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March 8, 2022

Delegate Luke Clippinger  
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Dear Chair Clippinger and Members of the Committee:

The Legislative Black Caucus of Maryland (LBCM) has voted to offer **favorable** support for HB 920- Correctional Services- Medical Parole-Life Imprisonment. This legislation repeals a gubernatorial approval to grant medical parole to an inmate serving life imprisonment.

HB 920 brings in line that sole decisions of these paroles be to the Maryland Parole Commission, therefore, eliminating the Governor's role in the parole process and is consistent with similar changes made by the legislature to the parole decision process in 2021. Thus, the decision related to their medical parole will occur more quickly. Those prisoners likely to benefit are those who are terminally ill and have an advanced stage of cancer, might be wheelchair bound, or have suffered multiple strokes. This will not open the flood gates, but rather pertains to prisoners who are at the end of life and likely will shortly die in prison if they are not released, rather than at home with family or in hospice care.

Incarceration is most acute for disadvantaged minorities, with incarceration being 5 to 8 times higher for them than for whites. In addition, minority populations are more likely to be part of this medically challenged prison population who have higher burdens of health challenges from cardiovascular disease, cancer, and diabetes. For these reasons, the Legislative Black Caucus of Maryland, Inc. supports HB 920.

Respectfully,

*Darryl Barnes*

Darryl Barnes  
Chair, Legislative Black Caucus  
of Maryland

*Melissa Wells*

Melissa Wells  
1<sup>st</sup> Vice Chair, Legislative Black  
Caucus of Maryland