



House Judiciary Committee

March 7, 2024

House Bill 531

**Correctional Services - Parole Supervision Fees and
Drug and Alcohol Abuse Test Payment - Repeal
Support**

NCADD-Maryland supports House Bill 531. In Maryland, fees are charged to people who are under parole and probation supervision. Fees are also charged for things like drug testing which is often required for many whose convictions are linked to drug use. When these are not paid, people are eligible to have their supervision violated and they can potentially be re-incarcerated.

A report from the Fines and Fees Justice Center and REFORM Alliance did a 50-state survey and found when people cannot afford probation and parole fees, they are often re-incarcerated and the length of supervision can be extended.¹ A survey from 2023 by the Prison Policy Initiative did a close look at data collected by the National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH). Among the facts discussed include:

Three in 10 people under community supervision have substance use disorders, four times the rate of substance use disorders in the general population. Similarly, 1 in 5 people under community supervision has a mental health disorder, twice the rate of the general population.²

With people on parole and probation more like to have serious health problems, behavioral health disorders, and a lack of health insurance³, the challenges to find a job in order to have an income sufficient to afford housing and other basic needs, plus the supervision fees required by Maryland can be insurmountable. According to a 2022 report from the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services, 66.7% of people released from prison from FY 2016 to FY 2019 were released under some form of post-release supervision. Of those, 39% returned to incarceration due to technical violations of community supervision.⁴

(over)

¹ <https://finesandfeesjusticecenter.org/articles/50-state-survey-probation-and-parole-fees/>

² https://www.prisonpolicy.org/blog/2023/04/03/nsduh_probation_parole/

³ Ibid.

⁴ https://dpscs.maryland.gov/publicinfo/publications/pdfs/2022_p157_DPSCS_Recidivism%20Report.pdf

NCADD-Maryland believes that these fees established by the state set people up for failure. This kind of policy change is a necessary component to significantly improving our communities. When people have served their time, they should have the opportunities and supports needed to ensure they are able maintain productive lives and livelihoods with their families. Removing some of the barriers to success will also help people with substance use disorders maintain their recovery.

We urge your support of House Bill 531.