

REAL CRIMINAL JUSTICE



KEY PARTNERS

Out for Justice
ACLU

THE PROBLEM

- Marylanders are unjustly and wrongfully incarcerated.
- People who have been incarcerated face marginalization, perpetual punishment, and barriers to housing and employment.

THE PEOPLE

Returning citizens, their families, their communities, and everyone who faces undue social and financial hardship as a result of their contact with the Maryland criminal justice system. Our racist justice system disproportionately targets Black and Brown people.

THE LEGISLATION

- Create women's pre-release facilities.
- Expand the charges that are eligible for expungement.
- Prohibit interrogations of young people without their guardians or lawyers present.
- Compensate victims of wrongful conviction and confinement.

THE LEGISLATORS

- Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee, Chair: Bobby Zirkin (Baltimore County)
- House Judiciary Committee, Chair: Luke Clippinger (Baltimore City)
- Expected Champions: Delegates Charlotte Crutchfield (Montgomery) and Brooke Lierman (Baltimore City); Senators Jill Carter and Mary Washington (Baltimore City)

While legislative details are still being determined, we expect real criminal justice to be an important issue for our partners in 2020.

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JUFJ'S ANALYSIS

All people deserve dignity and respect, whether they are incarcerated or not. Nobody should be unjustly imprisoned, and nobody should be stigmatized because of their imprisonment. We need to support Marylanders returning from incarceration into society.

- Pre-release programs help soon to be released people secure employment, treatment, and family support. Maryland has nine of these facilities for men and none for women.
- Most charges that do not lead to conviction can be expunged. If someone is charged with a group of crimes (a "unit") and convicted of just one, none of the charges can be expunged.
- Officers in Maryland can interrogate a child and decide if that child understands their rights. Children should have a lawyer/guardian with them instead of relying on the judgement of police.
- Opportunities this legislative session:
 - The pre-release program legislation will be introduced for the third year in a row.
 - There is momentum in Annapolis for juvenile justice reform. Last session's bills limiting solitary confinement for minors had overwhelming bipartisan support. We have heard that Senator Bobby Zirkin is open to additional protections.
- Challenges this legislative session:
 - We expect opposition from the Fraternal Order of Police and Governor Hogan.
 - Juvenile interrogation legislation is in its first year; most bills take multiple years to pass.
- JUFJ's Role:
 - JUFJ centers the voices of people most affected by racial and economic inequity. Out for Justice is largely made up of people who have been directly affected by interactions with the criminal justice system. Partnering with Out for Justice helps JUFJ live our values and builds the power of our partners by amplifying the powerful work they are doing.
 - In addition to lobbying in Annapolis, Out for Justice has said that JUFJ would be a valuable ally in research and data gathering.

NOTES