



Testimony for the House Judiciary Committee

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March 1, 2016

HB 255 Correctional Services - Medical Parole - Approval of Governor

SUPPORT

The ACLU of Maryland supports HB 255, which would remove the requirement that the Governor approve individuals recommended for medical parole. Maryland's current practice of requiring gubernatorial approval inappropriately politicizes the parole process and operates without regard for the practical implications of ill inmates who pose no public safety risk.

Maryland is one of only three states in which the governor must sign off on a parole recommendation.¹ HB 255 seeks to take the politics out of parole by leaving the decision to parole up to the Parole Commission. No one is better poised to make that judgment than the parole commissioners, who are appointed by the Governor and who conduct face-to-face interviews with potential parolees, understand the nature of the conditions afflicting the parolees, and have an understanding of the potential dangerousness of each inmate.

For these reasons, we urge a favorable report on HB 255.

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¹ California and Arkansas also have systems in which the Governor must approve the parole decision.