



House Bill 1368

Correctional Services – Home County Correctional Facility Program

MACo Position: **OPPOSE**

To: Judiciary Committee

Date: March 6, 2020

From: Natasha Mehu

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **OPPOSES** HB 1368. While well intentioned, the bill as introduced forces a costly and unworkable program on local jails.

HB 1368 would require the state to establish a relocation program in which inmates in state prison can opt to spend their last 5 years of their term in the local jail of their “home” county. The local jail would be responsible for providing programming and support to help the inmate reenter into the community.

Counties are concerned the program would result in influx of state prisoners into the local jails. This raises significant cost, oversight, and space issues if all eligible state prisoners opt to participate. The local jails would have no say as to whether they are willing or even able to accept the inmates and would receive no state funding or reimbursement for housing and programming provided to the state inmate. The jails would have to hire additional staff to oversee the state prisoners within this program. The state prisoners would also occupy the limited bed space in some local facilities. Ultimately, the bill would shift state responsibilities and costs onto the counties rather than form an equal, optional partnership program.

Counties believe the program in its current form is unworkable. Accordingly, MACo urges an **UNFAVORABLE** report on HB 1368.