



Senate Bill 868

Correctional Services – Inmate Release

MACo Position: **SUPPORT**
with AMENDMENTS

To: Judicial Proceedings Committee

Date: March 4, 2021

From: Michael Sanderson

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **SUPPORTS SB 868 WITH AMENDMENTS**. This bill creates a system to relocate State prisoners to their “home” jurisdiction’s detention facility during the days prior to their release. **MACo urges amendments to grant the host facility’s governing body an approval over such arrangements and their details.**

Communities that host State correctional facilities bear a community burden associated with prisoner release. In some cases, without access to transportation and other resources, newly released inmates have little choice but to seek short-term accommodations in the area surrounding the facility – and in some cases remain there. SB 868 seeks to target this concern by creating a process for relocating inmates to their “home” jurisdiction prior to release, to increase the likelihood that family and familiar contacts will offer a more readily available landing for newly released inmates.

Under the terms of SB 868 as written, the State and county may determine a rate of compensation for the short-term care envisioned under the bill. MACo urges that this negotiation be expanded to include the local agreement by the governing body of the affected county – ensuring that the community effects beyond the local detention center will be properly considered as part of the receiving county’s acceptance. The agreement with the host county and its facility could determine the categories of inmates suitable for transfer, the appropriate duration to be housed locally, and the like. With such an amendment, MACo would support this approach to this concern.

Accordingly, MACo urges the Committee to give SB 868 a **FAVORABLE** report, **with amendments** to ensure that the governing body of the affected local detention center has agreed to the terms of the arrangement.