

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY COUNCIL
COMMITTEE REPORT
2024 Legislative Session

Reference No.: CR-015-2025

Draft No.: 1

Committee: Health, Human Services, and Public Safety

Date: March 18, 2025

Action: FAV

REPORT:

Committee Vote: Favorable 4-0 (In favor of Council Members Fisher, Blegay, Hawkins, and Watson)

Absent: Council Member Olson

The Health, Human Services, and Public Safety Committee convened on March 18, 2025, to consider CR-015-2025, which was introduced and referred on February 18, 2025.

Staff provided an overview of CR-015-2025, proposed by Council Member Oriadha. This bill supports the People's Response Act, which was introduced in Congress but has not yet become law. It advocates for the development and implementation of programs that offer mental health care for formerly incarcerated individuals, ensuring access to treatment outside of the prison system.

David Noto, Legislative Budget and Policy Analyst provided a Policy Analysis and Fiscal Impact Statement indicating no direct impact on expenditures and revenues.

Council Member Oriadha wanted to thank Life After Release for advocating for this legislation at the federal level. She emphasized that this is an opportunity to show support for ensuring that mental health resources are integrated into the criminal justice system. She expressed that as many individuals return home, we must ensure they have the necessary resources to reintegrate successfully.

Sakinda Skinner, Council Liaison, Office of the Acting County Executive, expressed support for CR-015-2025 while emphasizing the need to consider funding constraints due to federal budget cuts. She acknowledged the resolution's goal to assist returning citizens and provide holistic

services to reduce recidivism while also highlighting the financial challenges of creating and implementing programs for incarcerated individuals.

Council Member Fisher expressed appreciation for the resolution, noting that since it is non-binding, it does not impose direct obligations on the county. She acknowledged the high cost of care but hoped some solutions could be worked out.

Council Member Oriadha confirmed that the resolution supports previous federal legislation, with the expectation that resources at the federal level would eventually benefit the county.

Office of Law finds it in proper legislative form and sees no legal impediment to its adoption.

Martin Mitchell, Representing Life After Release, supported CR-015-2025, advocating for non-carceral mental health care in Prince George's County. He highlighted the negative impact of incarceration on mental health and the challenges of reentry, emphasizing the need for community-based mental health support to break cycles of recidivism. Mr. Mitchell urged the Council to take concrete steps to implement and fund programs for incarcerated individuals, positioning the county as a leader in prioritizing health and community safety.

Council Member Watson made a motion to move favorably, which Council Member Hawkins seconded.

The Health, Human Services, and Public Safety Committee voted favorably 4-0 on CR-015-2024.