



Raphael Washington
Wayne County Sheriff

Chairwoman Kara Hope-D
Anderson House Office Building
124 North Capitol Ave.
NHOB 10-1093
Lansing, MI 48933

April 21, 2023

Dear Chairwoman Hope,

As Sheriff of the largest county in Michigan, I am reaching out to express my complete and unwavering support for House Bills 4450, 4451, 4452 and 4453. Unfortunately, due to scheduling conflicts, I cannot be in attendance to provide testimony. Please accept this as my letter of support for the Safer Michigan Act.

We have carefully reviewed the proposed legislation, and we believe these House bills take extraordinary and critical steps towards developing safer communities for all Michiganders.

Wayne County receives more than 250 returning citizens from the Michigan Department of Corrections every month. We strongly believe that returning citizens should be equipped with the necessary skills and education to live productive lives and contribute to their communities. For those who have served their time, providing access to education and stable employment is the key to ending cycles of crime and making Michigan safer.

As a career law enforcement officer, I know first-hand the challenges of working in an environment with limited opportunities for those suffering under the weight of poverty, poor educational opportunities, and hopelessness. Moreover, our resources as law enforcement agencies are stretched very thin which necessitates innovative approaches to preventing recidivism.

The Safer Michigan Act allows for an incentive program that rewards hard work, discipline, and commitment for the incarcerated looking to change their lives. Most importantly, it holds them accountable while they assimilate back into society and reduces the chances that they will return behind bars.

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There is no doubt that we want our returning citizens to fully accept responsibility for their crimes and commit to a future that requires consistent action on their behalf to achieve success. We believe the Safer Michigan Act will play a significant role in ensuring there is an opportunity for those citizens to achieve success and make us safer.

Most notably, this bill package is not a “*get out of jail free card*” – this is about accountability, opportunity, and safety. With this bill package, individuals will be required to dedicate themselves to a process of transformation and giving back to society along the way.

Thank you for your time and consideration of my opinion on this crucial bill package.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Raphael Washington". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'R'.

Raphael Washington
Wayne County Sheriff

CC:

Majority Vice Chair Joey Andrews-D
Representative Tyrone Carter-D
Representative Kelley Breen-D
Representative Stephanie A. Young-D
Representative Emily Divenedorf-D
Representative Penelope Tsernoglou
Minority Vice Chair Graham Filler-R
Representative Mike Mueller-R
Representative Mike Harris-R
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