



2021

# LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

Out for Justice, Inc. (OFJ) is an organization comprised of individuals who are both directly and indirectly impacted by the criminal justice system advocating for the reform of policies and practices that adversely affect successful reintegration into society.

## **Pre-Trial Voting Rights**

OFJ will support legislation that requires correctional facilities to 1) identify all eligible voters who are involved in the legal system; 2) let them know about their voting rights; and, 3) give them a clear opportunity to enact that right, whether in the community or behind the walls.

## **Protecting Children from Interrogation**

OFJ will support legislation that prohibits the interrogation of minors by a law enforcement until their parent or guardian has been notified and the child has consulted with an attorney.

## **Fair Employment and Wages Behind the Walls**

OFJ will support legislation that requires transparent reporting surrounding patterns of employment access and wages behind the walls, especially according to race, age, and gender. We will also call for transparency surrounding the "cost of living" deductions taken out of all paychecks.

## **Veto Overrides**

### **Equitable & Gender-Responsive Pre-release**

During the 2020 legislative session, OFJ supported SB0684, which required Maryland to open a stand-alone pre-release center for women. It is time for Maryland to provide equitable pre-release services for men and women, and to provide services that are responsive to women's specific needs. Although the Maryland legislature voted to pass our bill, it was vetoed by Governor Hogan. Together with partners across the state, we will override the veto in 2021.

### **Repealing the "Unit Rule"**

During the 2020 legislative session, OFJ supported Job Opportunities Task Force in their call for allowing the expungement of any eligible charges within a unit, regardless of whether there are other ineligible charges within the same unit. The Maryland legislature voted in support of our bill (HB1336), but it was also vetoed by Governor Hogan. Together with our partners, we will override the veto in 2021.

## **We Are Watching**

ID LAW IMPLEMENTATION: Are correctional facilities providing ID's as required by the new law?

INJUSTICE IN THE COURTS: Instructions given to jurors, evidence withheld from the defense team, and the impact of judicial discretion.

QUALIFIED IMMUNITY: The harmful doctrine that substantially limits the ability of citizens to recover damages for constitutional violations committed by law enforcement