



TESTIMONY OF
Monya Saunders
IN SUPPORT OF RAISED BILL NO. 987 (Justice Reinvestment)

March 10, 2021

Thank you to Chairman Winfield, Chairman Stafstrom, Vice Chairs Kasser and Blumenthal, and Ranking members Kissel and Fishbein, and all of the members of the Judiciary Committee, for holding this hearing.

My name is Monya Saunders, and I work at the Transitions Clinic as a Community Health Worker. The Transitions Clinic program serves the primary care needs of recently-released prisoners and their families. I am testifying in support of Raised Bill No. 987, which would reinvest funds saved from the closing of Northern CI to community to the needs of people leaving incarceration, including reentry coordination, housing, and crucially funds the hiring of community health workers for people leaving incarceration.

As a Community Health Care worker, I assist men and woman transitioning back into the community from jail or prison. I offer primary care providers, mental health treatment, substance use treatment if needed along with advocacy for the men and woman. And overall support in areas where I may be helpful.

More funds to hire more Community health workers would be amazing, and effective for our community and the people returning home to be better supported. And with a better chance to prevent recidivism. Other huge problems we face with assisting this population are housing and photo ID. I hope a large part of this funds with help with creating more housing. I support this raised Bill 987, with hopes for positive changes for formally incarcerated men and woman.

Thank you to all of you for listening today and considering this important bill for Justice Reinvestment.