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PRESS RELEASE

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Attorney General Brown Announces 2025 Legislative Priorities *Agenda Focuses on Expanding Protections for Vulnerable Adults and Establishing Worker Protection Unit*

BALTIMORE, MD (January 8, 2025) - Attorney General Anthony G. Brown today announced his priority legislation for the 2025 Maryland General Assembly session. Attorney General Brown will introduce a series of bills that focus on protecting the civil rights, health, and well-being of Marylanders, with particular focus on those most vulnerable to both long-standing threats and new risks.

Attorney General Brown will propose legislation that advances protections for Marylanders living in assisted living facilities who experience abuse and exploitation and for workers who deserve to have fair wages and safe working conditions vigorously enforced. Additionally, he will seek to shore up Maryland's civil rights laws.

"This legislative session, we are championing bills that safeguard Marylanders' rights, ensuring they can trust the Attorney General's Office to defend their interests regardless of federal priorities," **said Attorney General Brown**. "I am committed to doing whatever it takes to protect residents in nursing homes and assisted living facilities, ensure workers receive the wages they are owed, and uphold the rights of those in private detention centers. Each of these proposals underscores our Office's dedication to building a fairer and more just Maryland while fulfilling my top priority: protecting Marylanders."

Attorney General Brown's goal is to ensure that the rights and privileges of all Marylanders will remain protected regardless of who holds power in the federal government or who may seek to violate those rights here at home. Specifically, Attorney General Brown's 2025 legislative priorities include:

- **Protection of Vulnerable Adults:** People over the age of 65 make up the largest population in the United States. Many seniors and other vulnerable adults in long-term care facilities are victims of crimes ranging from financial exploitation to physical abuse and neglect. To combat these injustices, Attorney General Brown will propose two measures that would further protect some of society's most at-risk populations from manipulation and abuse by:

- Requiring video recording equipment to be installed in common areas of long-term care facilities to improve transparency and accountability in skilled nursing and assisted living environments; and
- Protecting the trust relationship between patient and provider by holding caregivers, whether facility staff or family members, to a higher standard in their financial interactions with vulnerable adults.

· **Worker Protection Legislation:** Attorney General Brown will propose changes to laws that will promote fair labor practices across all industries.

- To combat wage theft in Maryland, which occurs when an employer withholds benefits that an employee has already worked for, Attorney General Brown will pursue authorization to establish a Worker Protection Unit within his office. This initiative will empower the Office of the Attorney General to enforce worker protection laws along with the Maryland Department of Labor, ensuring that workers' rights are safeguarded without delay or limitations.
- Attorney General Brown will also propose revisions to the Workplace Fraud Act to enhance existing law by applying the Act's protections to all industries in the state and streamline processes for investigations, among other things.

· **Protection of Rights in Private Detention Centers:** Attorney General Brown will propose a bill that ensures private detention centers in Maryland respect all rights guaranteed by the U.S. and Maryland Constitutions and laws. The bill allows the Attorney General's Office to take legal action if private detention centers violate the rights of detainees. This ensures people in Maryland's private detention centers have the same basic rights and protections as those in public facilities.

Attorney General Brown intends to pursue legislation that proposes additions to Maryland's housing and employment laws that will clarify that practices that have a discriminatory effect are prohibited and requires local jurisdictions to increase efforts to ensure that they promote fair housing.

Attorney General Brown will also support legislation that addresses the crisis of mass incarceration of black Marylanders in state prisons and jails, consistent with the [18 recommendations](#), made on December 12, 2024, by the Maryland Equitable Justice Collaborative (MEJC), for legislative and agency reforms, program development, data collection, and other measures. The MEJC is a historic partnership between the Office of the Attorney General and Office of the Public Defender. Among other things, these proposals seek to:

- Amend the compulsory school attendance requirements to allow justice-involved youth to complete their high school requirements through the GED process;
- Increase the number of people eligible for earlier parole consideration due to serious medical conditions and having reached an age where they no longer pose a threat to public safety; and
- Expand access to Second Look laws that empower judges to reduce or modify, but not increase, long prison sentences under specific conditions.

Attorney General Brown is looking forward to the 2025 session of the Maryland General Assembly and to working together with lawmakers toward a more just and equitable state for all Marylanders.

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