



**MONTGOMERY COUNTY COUNCIL**

**ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND**

Maryland Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee and the House Judiciary Committee  
Miller Senate Office Building  
11 Bladen St.  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Dear Committee Members,

We write today in support of repealing the Law Enforcement Officers' Bill of Rights (LEOBR) and amending the Maryland Public Information Act (MPIA) for the purpose of increasing public transparency in police behavior and building trust between police officers and the community they are entrusted to keep safe.

While we have admiration and respect for our police officers, we believe that the culture and systems currently in place must be improved in order to foster an environment where accountability and reform can be made. Several recent and alarming actions, including the shooting death of an unarmed resident, only further our serious concerns about the current situation.

As elected officeholders in Montgomery County, Maryland's largest jurisdiction, we have examined the current state of community-police relationships and taken action.

In 2019 the County Council passed the Law Enforcement Trust and Transparency (LETT) Act to address concerns about self-investigation within the Montgomery County Police Department (MCPD). In 2020 the Council established the Policing Advisory Commission to promote community involvement in police best practices. The Council also passed legislation limiting the use of force and no-knock warrants, and we are on record supporting changes to the MPIA law so that more information about police disciplinary matters is made publicly available.

Currently before the Council is the Police Accountability Act, legislation aimed at reforming MCPD's disciplinary procedures — reforms that have been hampered by LEOBR.

Maryland is one of only 16 states to maintain LEOBR in its code. Further, the state's MPIA does not offer Maryland residents with transparency — basic information about state employees is withheld from taxpayers. To further our goals of increasing transparency and accountability, we seek the full repeal of LEOBR and amendments to the MPIA.

Under the existing framework, LEOBR and MPIA prevent elected officials and the general public from obtaining basic — but pertinent — information about current actions of our police officers and their backgrounds. This information deserves to be made public. By allowing LEOBR to intentionally obscure the professional history and potential red flags of a police officer's behavior

does a tremendous disservice to the public and to other members of the force who fulfill their duties faithfully and respectfully.

Without access to an officer's professional work history, we cannot heal the relationship between the police and a community they serve, which has become increasingly distrustful of police behavior.

The General Assembly must make the necessary changes to these very consequential laws. Given the national discussion on police reform following the killings of unarmed Black people, both in Maryland and around the country, we encourage our colleagues in the Senate and House of Delegates to seek the transparency and increased public access to information that is necessary in order to rebuild trust between the police and the community.

We urge you to take the commonsense step of repealing LEOBR and amending MPIA law. These steps will further the shared goals of healing our community, rebuilding trust, and creating a safer work environment of police officers.

Will Jawando

Councilmember At-Large

Hans Riemer

Councilmember At-Large

Evan Glass

Councilmember At-Large