

Bill Number: SB209
Scott D. Shellenberger, State's Attorney for Baltimore County
Support

WRITTEN TESTIMONY OF SCOTT D. SHELLENBERGER,
STATE'S ATTORNEY FOR BALTIMORE COUNTY,
IN SUPPORT OF SENATE BILL 209 –
UNRULY SOCIAL GATHERINGS

I write in support of Senate Bill 209. Unruly social gatherings is a bill that is patterned after a law in Baltimore County that has been very successful in keeping neighborhoods calm and quiet.

For several years, in the Towson area, there was a huge problem with house parties involving college students. In 2016, Baltimore County enacted a pilot program to deal with houses in the Towson area where parties were out of control. In 2017, due to the success of the pilot program, the Social Host ordinance became law and was expanded.

Since the start of the pilot the number of complaints from home owners have dropped tremendously. Senate Bill 209 is patterned after the Baltimore County ordinance. Senate Bill 209 would allow local jurisdictions to hold homeowners civilly responsible for unruly social gatherings. While the intent of the original county ordinance was designed to get college gatherings under control, the county ordinance has allowed the control of all types of crowds and ages.

This will be a very effective tool in college towns throughout the state.

Based on the success we have had in Baltimore County, I urge a favorable report of Senate Bill 209.