



THE PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY GOVERNMENT

OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

BILL: Senate Bill 454 - Public Safety – Mandatory Mental Health Training – First Responders and Law Enforcement Officers

SPONSOR: Senators Pinsky, *et al.*

HEARING DATE: February 13, 2020

COMMITTEE: Judicial Proceedings

CONTACT: Intergovernmental Affairs Office, 301-780-8411

POSITION: SUPPORT

The Office of the Prince George's County Executive **SUPPORTS Senate Bill 454 - Public Safety – Mandatory Mental Health Training – First Responders and Law Enforcement Officers** which would require all law enforcement officers to receive mental health awareness training as approved by the Maryland Police & Corrections Training Commissions (MPCTC).

MPCTC already requires all law enforcement agencies to train their officers in subject areas regarding individuals with physical, intellectual, developmental, and psychiatric disabilities. The Commission also require law enforcement officers to complete autism awareness training. This bill articulates what must be included in mental health awareness training, covering topics such as crisis de-escalation and connecting individuals with health services. The Prince George's Police Department already complies with the training as outlined in this bill, and while we can't speak for the MPCTC, we suspect most agencies across the state also teach a mental health block in line with this legislation.

Mental health training has become an essential portion of any basic recruit training class, and we see no need not to codify this training as an ongoing requirement for all future police officers/first responders.

For the reasons stated above, the Office of the Prince George's County Executive **SUPPORTS Senate Bill 454** and asks for a **FAVORABLE** report.