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FROM THE GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF CRIME PREVENTION, YOUTH, AND VICTIM SERVICES

March 3, 2020

Chair William C. Smith Jr.
Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee
2 East
Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Re: Senate Bill 745: Criminal Organizations – Penalties, Procedure, and Elements

POSITION: Letter of Support

Dear Chair Smith and Members of the Committee,

The Governor's Office of Crime Prevention, Youth, and Victim Services ("Office") is providing this letter of support for Senate Bill 745: Criminal Organizations – Penalties, Procedure, and Elements.

This legislation comes as a result of the recommendations from the Task Force to Study Maryland's Criminal Gang Statutes which met throughout 2019. The Task Force was staffed by the Governor's Office of Crime Prevention, Youth, and Victim Services. Additionally, the Office had one representative who served on the Task Force.

Senate Bill 745 makes several changes to the existing criminal gang statutes. These changes include (1) replacing the language "criminal gang" with "criminal organization" within existing criminal law and criminal procedure articles, (2) expands the list of underlying crimes for criminal gang offenses, (3) specifies that assets divested from gangs as a result of local investigations and prosecutions must go to local jurisdictions to be used only on specified services and law enforcement-related efforts, and (4) requires the Attorney General, in consultation with the Maryland State's Attorneys' Association, to develop a plan for a formal process for oversight of prosecutions under the Criminal Law Article.

These recommendations received a majority vote from the members of the Task Force. The Task Force met five times in different locations across the state during 2019, before voting on the final recommendations that are reflected in Senate Bill 745.

The Governor's Office of Crime Prevention, Youth, and Victim Services urges a favorable report. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'V. Glenn Fueston, Jr.', with a stylized, cursive script.

V. Glenn Fueston, Jr.

Executive Director

Governor's Office of Crime Prevention, Youth, and Victim Services

For all inquiries, please contact
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