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

Chair Clippinger, Vice-Chair Atterbeary, Members of the Committee  
House Judiciary Committee  
Room 101  
House Office Building  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

March 3, 2020

### **House Bill 1408: Public Safety - Baltimore City - P.R.O.T.E.C.T (Public Resources Organizing to End Crime Together) Program**

#### **Position: Informational**

Dear Chair Clippinger, Vice-Chair Atterbeary, and Members of the Committee:

House Bill 1408 Public Safety - Baltimore City - P.R.O.T.E.C.T (Public Resources Organizing to End Crime Together) Program requires state entities -- the Maryland State Police (MSP), Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services (DPSCS), Department of Juvenile Services (DJS), and Governor's Office of Crime Prevention, Youth, and Victim Services -- to support strategies to reduce crime in Baltimore City.

These agencies are an important part of the Hogan Administration's initiatives to reduce crime in Baltimore City. The Administration has invested more than \$1 billion in public safety programs in Baltimore City since 2015. This includes enacting the Enhanced Visibility Patrol Initiative through which state law enforcement officers, including the Maryland State Police, Maryland Capitol Police, Maryland Transportation Authority Police, and Maryland Transit Administration Police, patrol high crime areas to detect and deter criminal activity; pushing for a joint strike force comprised of 200 law enforcement officials focused on disrupting and dismantling violent crime organizations; working with local, state, and federal partners to serve high priority

warrants; embedding parole and probation agents within the police department; launching a comprehensive juvenile justice initiative to better provide supervision and resources to youth; and creating the Maryland Criminal Intelligence Network to allow for better data sharing across local, state, and federal law enforcement.

House Bill 1408 embraces many of the principles underlying these Administration initiatives, particularly collaboration between local, state, and federal agencies as well as intelligence sharing.

For example, House Bill 1408 would require the Maryland State Police (MSP), Division of Parole and Probation (DPP) and the Department of Juvenile Services (DJS) to establish and operate a warrant apprehension task force partnership. It should be noted that these agencies already participate in various warrant initiatives in cooperation with local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies. This collaboration has yielded more than 500 arrests from over 700 open warrants related to crimes including murder, attempted murder, and firearm violations. The MSP continues to work with local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies as part of warrant task forces in Baltimore City and throughout Maryland. The MSP is engaged with the United States Marshals Service warrant initiative to target violent fugitives and with the Baltimore Police Department (BPD) Warrant Apprehension Task Force. DJS also works in the BPD Warrant Apprehension Task Force in assisting police in executing warrants on youth offenders. Generally, parole and probation agents lack the legal authority to execute a search warrant. However, the Department does have a Warrant Apprehension Unit who are statutorily permitted to execute warrants for the arrest of probationers for whom a warrant is issued for an alleged violation of probation. The Department already has six full time detectives from WAU working in Baltimore City with BPD and United States Marshal Service.

The legislation also requires BPD, DJS, and DPP to establish collaborative district officer supervision teams to provide increased supervision of offenders. In August 2017, DPP began requiring parole and probation agents in Baltimore City to report to BPD precincts to hold face-to-face check-ins with offenders under supervision. Currently, DPP reports to the following BPD precincts: Northwestern; Northern; Northeastern; Western; Eastern; Southwestern; Southern; and Southeastern. Agents report to each of these precincts five days a week. From August 25, 2017 to January 23, 2020, DPP has conducted 47,344 face-to-face contacts with offenders at one of these BPD precincts. DPP Agents and BPD Officers also already conduct joint home visits. From August 25, 2017 to January 23, 2020 they have conducted 8,586 joint home contacts and there have been 364 warrants served on DPP offenders while reporting to their agents at the police district.

Additionally, earlier this year, the Administration announced the launch of a new comprehensive juvenile crime strategy to create a better service delivery model and develop a stronger youth accountability process to appropriately provide supervision and services to youth early on.

In addition to duplicating initiatives that are already occurring, there are several provisions of the House Bill 1408 that pose operational challenges we wish to bring to the Committee's attention:

First, the legislation requires the Maryland State Police to extend its area of jurisdiction for patrol, traffic control and accident investigations into highways and streets that serve as significant entry and exit corridors into Baltimore City, as specified by the Baltimore City Police Commissioner. MSP has limited resources, and these resources should be used to maximize visibility and enforcement initiatives. If legislation directs the MSP to specific locations, the Superintendent of the State Police would have fewer personnel to perform their prescribed patrol and criminal investigation duties around the State as well as diminish the ability to assign or loan to the City for data driven assistance in high risk areas. Further, all 911 calls go to BPD for initial assignment and if MSP is responding to other calls, BPD would still be required to handle incidents on those corridors. Specifically related to I-83, a main corridor into and out of the City, current traffic patrol and enforcement efforts are hampered by significant engineering barriers to conduct the enforcement safely.

Additionally, House Bill 1408 requires the DJS and DPSCS to staff the Baltimore City Juvenile Booking Facility and the Baltimore Detention Center, respectively. These provisions pose issues for different reasons. The Baltimore City Juvenile Justice Center contains a separate booking space for young people that is staffed and managed by Baltimore City police officers.

BPD has previously reported that they utilize sworn officers that are on light or restricted duty, not patrolling at the present time. BPD has further stated that assigning this non-patrol status personnel to perform administrative duties at the BCJJC does not impact staffing levels in the Districts.

DJS is not a correctional agency and unable to take over the functions of staffing the booking unit. If DJS were to move away from its role as a human services agency, the department could lose its ability to receive Title IV-E Federal Reimbursement, which provides approximately \$2.5 million dollars in federal aid to support children. DPSCS cannot staff the Baltimore Detention Center as the buildings have been demolished and no longer physically exist. If the intent is to mandate DPSCS staff the Baltimore City Booking and Intake Center, the Department already performs this function.

While the Administration certainly appreciates the acknowledgment that the crime levels in our State's largest city are unacceptable, none of these efforts will be successful if we can't keep violent offenders off the streets and illegal guns out of our communities. We urge you to pass the Administration's legislation to increase accountability for violent offenders, House Bill 356 Crimes - Firearms - Penalties and Procedures (Violent Firearms Offender Act of 2020); HB 357 Crimes - Victim and Witness Intimidation - Penalties and Procedures; and House Bill 355 State Commission on Criminal Sentencing Policy - Annual Report - Crimes of Violence (The Judicial Transparency Act of 2020).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "V. Glenn Fueston, Jr.", with a stylized flourish at the end.

V. Glenn Fueston, Jr.  
Executive Director  
Governor's Office of Crime Prevention, Youth, and Victim Services

CC: Delegate Dayla Attar

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