



BRANDON M. SCOTT
MAYOR

*Office of Government Relations
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Annapolis, Maryland 21401*

HB 91

February 4, 2021

TO: Members of the Appropriations Committee

FROM: Natasha Mehu, Director of Government Relations

RE: House Bill 91 - Public Safety - Police Athletic League Grant Fund - Establishment

POSITION: SUPPORT

Chair McIntosh, Vice Chair Chang, and Members of the Committee, please be advised that the Baltimore City Administration (BCA) **supports** House Bill (HB) 91.

House Bill 91 establishes a statewide \$500,000 grant fund administered by the Governor's Office of Crime Prevention, Youth, and Victim Services (GOCPYVS) to support Police Athletic League Programs (PALs). These programs play a valuable role in building the relationship between law enforcement and youth through educational and extracurricular activities. The goal of the program is to foster such relationships to prevent juvenile crime.

In Baltimore City, the PAL program suffered from budget cuts in 2009. The City went from a high of 27 programs to only a couple of remaining programs. The few remaining PALs in the state receive some funding through a GOCPYVS subgrant. Creating a dedicated grant program for PALs helps ensure that funding affected by cuts to other programs or shifts in the existing grant funds. Additional funding will also help enhance and expand PAL programs in the City and elsewhere. The fund created by HB 91 will bolster the relationship between youth and law enforcement and provide a long-term investment in reducing juvenile crime.

Accordingly, the BCA requests a **favorable** report on House Bill 91.