



## POSITION ON PROPOSED LEGISLATION

Bill: HB 365 Criminal Procedure - Office of the Attorney General - Prosecution of Police Officer

Position: Favorable

Date: February 12, 2021

The Maryland Office of the Public Defender supports HB 365, which would allow the Attorney General to investigate and prosecute police officers. As lawyers, we are often trained in ethics and identifying potential conflicts of interest. In the public defender's office, we often panel cases to private attorneys if we have a conflict of interest such as representing a co-defendant or if the complaining witness is a former client of our office.

For obvious reasons, prosecutors in Maryland often work closely with their local police departments. They use them as witness, provide training, and work together when seeking a conviction in a criminal case. In situations where a police officer is a potential criminal defendant, it may present a similar conflict of interest for local prosecutors. This bill would allow the attorney general to prosecute officers and alleviate potential conflicts of interest for local prosecutors.

For these reasons the Office of the Public Defender request a favorable report on HB 365.