

Bill Number: HB 502

Charles P. Strong, Jr., State's Attorney for Washington County

Opposed

WRITTEN TESTIMONY OF CHARLES P. STRONG, JR.

STATE'S ATTORNEY FOR WASHINGTON COUNTY

IN OPPOSITION TO HOUSE BILL 502

COLLECTION AND PUBLICATION OF PROSECUTORIAL INFORMATION

I write in opposition to House Bill 502 which would have a major fiscal impact on our budget. The bill would cost between \$500,000 and \$1,000,000 dollars to implement. Additional Attorneys, paralegals and an IT staffer would be needed. We would have to create a new web-based computer data base and program to input data, much of which is already available in MDEC, Maryland Judiciary Case Search, Maryland Sentencing guidelines, etc.

The Pandemic has created a backlog of a year's untried cases which will have to be dealt with as well as new cases which are constantly entering the system. Our resources, staffing and fiscal, will be stretched extremely thin with the Pandemic cleanup without diverting resources to a staffing and fiscally intensive collection and publication program to collect information, much of which is duplicative of other existing resources.

Washington County, our funding resource, is currently dealing with the fiscal impact of the current Pandemic. The bill offers no funding to assist the County, putting the burden solely on the County. We are already trying to cope with the unfunded impact of body cameras.

The bill further requires 24 plus separate databases but no uniform platform.

The Washington County State's Attorney's Office joins with the Maryland State's Attorneys' Association and our fellow State's Attorneys in requesting that this committee give HB 502 an unfavorable report.