



POSITION STATEMENT

TESTIMONY PRESENTED TO THE HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE
SENATE BILL 585 – PUBLIC SAFETY – WARRANTS AND ABSCONDING
Sponsor – Senator McCray et al

March 29, 2022

DONALD C. FRY
PRESIDENT & CEO
GREATER BALTIMORE COMMITTEE

Position: Support

Senate Bill 585 would include an annual appropriation of \$2 million in fiscal years 2024 through 2026 for local law enforcement agencies to be used as grants for warrant apprehension efforts. The Governor's Office of Crime Prevention, Youth, and Victim Services will administer the funding. Local law enforcement may use the funds to reduce the inventory warrants in the agency's jurisdiction; increase coordination and cooperation between local law enforcement and state and federal agencies regarding outstanding warrants; and reduce the number of outstanding warrants related to violent crimes.

The level of violence in the state, and in particular Baltimore City, is unacceptable and substantive changes are required to improve public safety and ensure economic vitality and competitiveness and increase the feeling of security among Maryland citizens. Improving public safety has been identified by the Greater Baltimore Committee (GBC) as a key economic growth issue that needs to be urgently addressed.

The GBC has recommended a two-pronged approach to reduce violent crime. The first prong addresses crime control through enhanced public safety programs focused on repeat violent offenders and better coordination among law enforcement agencies. The second prong - crime prevention - must be instituted simultaneously with the crime control efforts. It is critically important to address the root societal causes of crime with programs that address poverty, lack of employment, need for job training programs, and an increase in after-school programs, etc. The GBC backs these types of initiatives with the same weight afforded the crime control strategies.

Senate Bill 585 provides another tool to law enforcement to deal with the scourge of violent crime. By providing additional funding for warrant apprehension efforts, local law enforcement will be better able to get the most violent offenders off the streets.

For these reasons, the Greater Baltimore Committee urges a favorable report on Senate Bill 585.

The Greater Baltimore Committee (GBC) is a non-partisan, independent, regional business advocacy organization comprised of hundreds of businesses -- large, medium and small -- educational institutions, nonprofit organizations and foundations located in Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Carroll, Harford, and Howard counties as well as Baltimore City. The GBC is a 67-year-old, private-sector membership organization with a rich legacy of working with government to find solutions to problems that negatively affect our competitiveness and viability.

GREATER BALTIMORE COMMITTEE

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