



THE PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY GOVERNMENT

OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

BILL: SB0956 – Criminal Law - Threats to Public Officials

SPONSOR: Senator Watson

COMMITTEE: Judicial Proceedings

CONTACT: Intergovernmental Affairs Office, 301-780-8411

POSITION: SUPPORT

The Office of the Prince George's County Executive **SUPPORTS SB0956 – Criminal Law - Threats to Public Officials**, which adds health officers, election administrators, and public employees responsible for inspecting and enforcing housing and building codes and standards to the list of public officials against whom it is illegal to knowingly and willfully make a threat to take the life of, kidnap, or injure.

Maryland Health Officers are regularly harassed by the public, including receiving threats to their lives, homes, and families. Threats of violence caused the Health Officer in Montgomery County to step down in 2021. **SB 956** would codify the criminality of this behavior to ensure our public health officials and others are not actively threatened while trying to do their jobs.

SB 956 would allow prosecutors to hold people legally accountable for threats in any written form to intimidate and threaten public health officials, health officers, election administrators, and public employees who are responsible for inspecting and enforcing housing and building codes and standards. Elected officials already have such legal protection. A person who violates this law will be guilty of a misdemeanor and if convicted would be subject to imprisonment not exceeding 3 years or a fine not exceeding \$2,500 or both.

No one working to protect and serve the public good should fear for their lives. For these reasons, the Office of the Prince George's County Executive **SUPPORTS Senate Bill 956** and asks for a **FAVORABLE** report.