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SHERIFF MAXWELL C. UY

February 26, 2024

VIA E-MAIL: jeff.waldstreicher@senate.state.md.us and Cheryl.Kagan@senate.state.md.us

Senator Jeffrey Waldstreicher
Senator Cheryl C. Kagan
222 Lowe House Office Building
6 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

**Re: SB 1090 – Maryland Center for School Safety – Statewide Secure Schools
Emergency Response Program -- Established**

Dear Senators Waldstreicher and Kagan:

This letter confirms my stated support for enactment of SB 1090, as amended. As you know, the Montgomery County Sheriff's Office (MCSO) is actively involved in promoting school safety and staffs a Community Engagement Officer (CEO) at Magruder High School and an associated school cluster. In our view, the proposed legislation would provide an effective grant funding vehicle for Maryland public schools to evaluate and improve existing emergency notification systems that will enable schools to enhance communications both internally within individual school systems, as well as externally with law enforcement and first responders during an emergency.

We see a variety of tangible benefits likely to flow from this legislation. First, a grant-funding mechanism will provide a necessary jump-start to incentivize those school systems which have not otherwise prioritized the need to evaluate and enhance their existing emergency notification systems -- both within schools and with law enforcement agencies. Second, to the extent the grant-funding mechanism requires that school systems to engage in a consultative process with law enforcement as part of the grant application process, it will ensure that the relevant stakeholders have input into the funding process. Third, we think that such grant funding may also serve the added benefit of developing individual local school systems as "laboratories" to test a variety of emergency notification systems that may ultimately result in producing best practices for a model notification system should the State legislature decide to adopt a uniform notification system in the future.

The MCSO has many years of experience with and staffing school security and considers this grant funding mechanism to be an effective and necessary step in developing and enhancing security notification for local school systems. In sum, the MCSO fully supports this legislative effort to establish a grant funding mechanism to improve the emergency notification systems within our local school systems. Thank you for your efforts and consideration.

Sincerely,

Maxwell C. Uy
Sheriff