



NAACP

Maryland
STATE CONFERENCE

February 27, 2024

Judiciary
Maryland General Assembly
Annapolis, Maryland

Re: HB 707 – Public Safety – Law Enforcement – Use of Body–Worn Cameras

Members of the Committee,

As the Executive Director of the Maryland NAACP, I write to express our strong support for House Bill 707, which mandates the use of body-worn cameras for all sworn law enforcement officers while they are in uniform, in public, and conducting law enforcement duties.

The NAACP has long been a staunch advocate for police accountability and transparency. In recent years, incidents of police misconduct and excessive use of force have shaken the trust between law enforcement agencies and the communities they serve. Body-worn cameras have emerged as a crucial tool in fostering accountability, improving police-community relations, and ensuring justice for all.

HB 707 represents a significant step forward in enhancing police accountability across Maryland. By requiring the use of body-worn cameras for all sworn officers, regardless of rank, the legislation promotes transparency and holds law enforcement officers accountable for their actions while on duty. It provides a means to document interactions between officers and the public, thereby reducing incidents of misconduct, enhancing public trust, and safeguarding civil rights.

Moreover, this legislation is not merely about monitoring police behavior; it is about promoting public safety and building stronger communities. Research has consistently shown that the presence of body-worn cameras can lead to a reduction in the use of force by police officers and a decrease in citizen complaints. By fostering greater transparency and accountability, HB 707 contributes to the creation of safer and more just communities for all Maryland residents.

We commend the sponsors and supporters of HB 707 for their commitment to advancing police accountability and ensuring the protection of civil rights in our state. We urge all members of the Maryland Legislature to vote in favor of this critical piece of legislation and to stand on the right side of history.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

In Service,

NaShona Kess, Esq., MLS

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