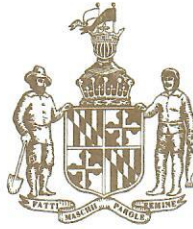


JOANNE C. BENSON  
Legislative District 24  
Prince George's County

Budget and Taxation Committee  
Education, Business and  
Administration Subcommittee  
Pensions Subcommittee  
Chair, Rules Committee

*Joint Committees*

Audit and Evaluation Committee  
Children, Youth, and Families  
Ending Homelessness  
Fair Practices and  
State Personnel Oversight  
Joint Committee on Pensions



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**Testimony of Senator Joanne C. Benson**

**SB36: Judicial Committee**

**Maryland Deaths in Custody Oversight Board**

Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman Smith, Vice Chairman Wildstreicher, of the Judicial Proceedings Committee. I am here to request your consideration for SB36 the Maryland Death in Custody Oversight Board.

More and more we are hearing about the need for oversight and transparency within our law enforcement agencies. This bill is designed for these purposes. It is requiring law enforcement and correctional agencies to publicly report specific information on in-custody deaths. Each agency must report to an appointed Oversight Board or Special Inspector which will be chosen by Correctional Ombudsman.

The information regarding the death of the inmate in custody must be released on their website within 10 days of the date of death. SB36 is very comprehensive but it is extremely important if we want to do our part in establishing trust between the public and our law enforcement agencies. We have solicited assistance from 15 advocates, law schools and clinics, students, and the community in compiling SB36. It is our hope that you give careful consideration to the contents and provide a favorable response.

Thank you