



Senate Bill 929

Sex Offender Registration – Local Law Enforcement Units – Registration Locations

MACo Position:

To: Judicial Proceedings Committee

LETTER OF INFORMATION

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From: Sarah Sample

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) offers this **LETTER OF INFORMATION** on SB 929. This bill mandates that local law enforcement agencies designate multiple locations across a jurisdiction for sex offenders to fulfill their register requirement in person.

Registering as a sex offender is an important accountability procedure for certain individuals with specific types of violations. Due to the nature of their crimes, the registration process can be complicated, and sensitive, if the individual opts to register in person. The safety and security of staff and the offender are paramount.

To comply with best practices, based on the mandates of this bill, each local law enforcement agency would be required to provide a separate space, staff, and equipment to fulfill the registration. This is necessary to protect the individual's privacy and safety. Additionally, staff members must be designated according to their willingness and ability to interact firsthand with a sex offender.

While counties believe offering a safe and secure in-person option is necessary, having them in more than two locations per jurisdiction is not operationally or financially feasible. To make the provisions of the bill more practical counties would make the below suggestions:

- narrow the mandate to the primary, county law enforcement agency per jurisdiction
- require multiple locations only for large jurisdictions with a population over 500,000
- designate two locations for large jurisdictions

Counties believe these adjustments will help fulfil the intent of the bill and allow for an efficient and orderly implementation. To that end, MACo willingly offers this **LETTER OF INFORMATION** on SB 929.