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**Testimony in Support Of:**

**House Bill 1063**

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Good afternoon, Chairman Clippinger, Vice Chair Bartlett, and esteemed members of the Judiciary Committee. My name is Perry Paylor, and I serve as the Deputy State's Attorney for Prince George's County. Today, I am here to express my strong support for House Bill 1063, as amended, which seeks to enhance Maryland's Organized Crime Statutes.

In my role, I oversee the Narcotics Intelligence Unit and our Major Crimes Unit, giving me firsthand insight into the complexities and challenges of combating organized crime. Over recent years, we've observed a significant evolution in organized crime within Maryland. The current statute, as outlined in the Maryland Criminal Law Article § 9-804, prohibits participation in a criminal organization if it's known that the organization engages in organized crime activities. However, the rapid evolution of these criminal networks necessitates a broader set of tools for prosecution.

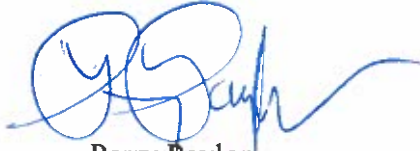
The amendments proposed in House Bill 1063 aim to expand the scope of underlying offenses that constitute organized crime. The bill includes prohibitions against firearm possession by individuals convicted of certain misdemeanors and felonies and addresses the making of threats of mass violence. This expansion is critical, as we've witnessed an alarming increase in violent crimes, particularly those involving firearms, among organized groups of young individuals. Disputes near or in schools often escalate to violence, with threats frequently exchanged via text messages and other digital means.

The proposed amendments to MD Criminal Law Article §9-801(g) are designed to broaden the definition of underlying crimes, thereby enhancing the prosecutorial power against those involved in organized criminal activities. This includes crimes such as carjacking and drug trafficking, which are often the result of concerted efforts by criminal organizations, gangs, or crews.

By passing House Bill 1063 with the proposed amendments, we will arm Maryland prosecutors with the necessary tools to effectively charge and prosecute every member of a criminal organization who benefits from violating state laws. This legislative enhancement is vital for the safety and security of our communities, particularly in Prince George's County.

I strongly believe that these amendments will significantly improve our ability to combat organized crime. Therefore, I respectfully urge you to issue a favorable report on House Bill 1063. Thank you for your consideration and for the opportunity to speak today.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Perry Paylor', with a long, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

Perry Paylor,  
Deputy State's Attorney for Prince George's County