



TESTIMONY FOR HB0027 No-Knock Warrants

Bill Sponsor: Delegate Acevero

Committee: Judiciary

Organization Submitting: Maryland Legislative Coalition

Person Submitting: Aileen Alex, co-chair

Position: FAVORABLE

I am submitting this testimony in favor of HB0027 on behalf of the Maryland Legislative Coalition. The Maryland Legislative Coalition is an association of activists--individuals and grassroots groups in every district in the state. We are unpaid citizen lobbyists, and our Coalition supports well over 30,000 members.

No-knock warrants have long been in the news, particularly after the horrific death of Breonna Taylor. The original intention of this legislation was to prevent no-knock warrants. However, Maryland Police Accountability Act of 2021 still gives police officers a lot of leeway to barge into a home in the middle of the night and force more tragic outcomes.

HB0027 addresses the amendments our Coalition previously offered during the passage of the 2021 legislation. HB0027 (1) establishes that a search warrant may not authorize a law enforcement officer executing the warrant to enter a building, apartment, premises, or place to be searched without first announcing the officer's purpose and authority; (2) specifies that a search warrant may be executed only between 8:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m.; and (3) requires an officer to alert any occupants within the location of the officer's authority and purpose.

MLC understands the need for search warrants. We even understand the need for law enforcement officers to have the element of surprise. However, we cannot put innocent people at risk to the extent we've seen historically. In addition, we agree with Maryland Department of Legislative that based on anecdotal evidence from other states and local jurisdictions, the bill's prohibitions on no-knock warrants could have a positive impact on Black individuals.

The Maryland Legislative Coalition supports this bill and recommends a **FAVORABLE** report in committee.