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The Honorable Luke Clippinger
Chairperson, House Judiciary Committee
House Office Building, Room 100
6 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Chair Clippinger and Members of the Judiciary Committee:

On behalf of the Maryland State's Attorney's Association, and the Frederick County State's Attorney's Office, I write in support of House Bill 318 – Theft – Mail and Mail Depository Key. Mail theft is on the rise, and one only has to conduct an internet news article search to uncover recent evidence, from all around the country, supporting that statement.

I am the Chief of the Economic Crimes Unit. I have been a prosecutor in this office for 21 years. I have prosecuted a broad range of crimes during that time, but most of my career has involved prosecuting burglaries, felony thefts and arsons. In addition to the news reflecting the problem, as a prosecutor in Frederick County, I review cases where the evidence is that mailboxes were targeted for the purpose of stealing the mail deposited therein. The loss to the victims is typically in the form of checks and the losses have ranged from thousands to hundreds of thousands of dollars.

Despite so many financial transactions occurring digitally, the U.S. Mail remains a vital part of the American economic financial transaction process with paper checks, even when using electronic banking options, routinely being sent through the post office. Current laws, such as Md. Code Ann., Criminal Law §7-104 (theft) or §8-301 (identity fraud) alone fail to properly capture, identify, document, and punish the crime being committed. The proposed addition of 7-106.1 to the Criminal Law Article fills a void and equips local police and prosecutors with a viable tool to combat this type of crime when it occurs in our jurisdictions.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide support for this bill and I urge this Committee to issue a favorable report on House Bill 318.

Sincerely,

Jason S. Shoemaker,
Chief, Economic Crimes Unit