

GARY SIMMONS
Legislative District 12B
Anne Arundel County

Judiciary Committee

Subcommittees

Criminal Law and Procedure

Family and Juvenile Law



The Maryland House of Delegates
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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

February 23, 2024

Judiciary Committee

Re: Testimony in Support of HB707 - Mandatory Use of Body-Worn Cameras for Law Enforcement Officers

Dear Chair and Members of the Committee,

I am writing to express my strong support for House Bill 707, which proposes the mandatory use of body-worn cameras for all sworn law enforcement officers, regardless of rank, while in uniform, in public, and conducting law enforcement-related duties. Implementing this policy is crucial to ensuring transparency, accountability, and public trust in our law enforcement agencies.

In recent years, body-worn cameras have proven to be an effective tool in enhancing accountability and fostering trust between law enforcement and the communities they serve. The footage captured by these cameras provides an unbiased record of interactions between officers and civilians, which can be invaluable in investigating complaints, resolving disputes, and ensuring the fair and just treatment of all individuals involved.

Mandating body-worn cameras for all sworn law enforcement officers conveys that the government is committed to upholding transparency and accountability within its law enforcement agencies. This not only protects the rights of citizens but also safeguards the reputation and integrity of the officers themselves.

Furthermore, the proposed legislation includes a thoughtful approach by outlining a clear policy framework for using body-worn cameras. This ensures that the implementation is fair and consistent and respects the privacy concerns of both officers and civilians. The policy should strike a balance that allows for the effective performance of law enforcement duties while respecting the rights and dignity of those being recorded.

In conclusion, House Bill 707 is a necessary and progressive measure that will significantly build public trust in law enforcement agencies. The use of body-worn cameras is a step towards creating a more accountable and transparent system, benefitting both officers and the communities they serve. I urge the committee to support and advance this vital piece of legislation for the betterment of our society.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gary Simmons", written over a light blue horizontal line.

Delegate Gary Simmons