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Budget and Taxation Committee

Subcommittees

Pensions

Public Safety, Transportation, and
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TESTIMONY - SENATE BILL 271
MARYLAND TORT CLAIMS ACT –
EMPLOYEES OF AN OFFICE OF A SHERIFF
JUDICIAL PROCEEDINGS COMMITTEE
JANUARY 29, 2025

Chair Smith, Vice Chair Waldstreicher, and Committee Members:

Senate Bill 271 is a straight-forward piece of legislation designed to provide clear protections to the civilian employees of Sheriffs' offices under the Maryland Tort Claims Act. This would bring Sheriffs' offices in line with the statutory language for State's Attorney's Offices, liquor boards, and local boards of elections.

Issues don't occur often for the civilian employees of a Sheriffs' Office, but there is ambiguity in the law as to who should represent them should instances arise. These protections are already in place for both Sheriffs and Deputy Sheriffs in individual agencies and this legislation simply extends them out to civilian employees as well.

As someone who spent the majority of his professional career in public safety, and as someone who personally directed an agency, I am confident that this legislation would provide our Sheriffs' offices the necessary protections to better perform their constitutionally mandated duties.

For the reasons listed above, I ask for a favorable report of Senate Bill 271.