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Office of the President

Hagerstown Community College Police Force - Jurisdiction – Senate Bill 504

Judicial Proceedings Committee

Wednesday, February 5, 2025 at 2:00 p.m.

**Testimony in Support of the Bill Submitted by
Dr. James Klauber**

I write to ask you to pass this legislation to enable our police officers to have expanded jurisdiction in the event of emergencies on or near our teaching locations. The current statute was written when Hagerstown Community College was located at a single location on rural farmland outside of the greater population of the City of Hagerstown and Washington County. Today, the College has two local schools, a hospital, and a school of osteopathic medicine as neighbors. The College has another training location under construction in the City of Hagerstown set to open later this semester. The College also is a partner in the Washington County Police Academy and conducts training at the Washington County Public Safety Training Center. These three locations are spread across the County, and our HCC police officers are regularly at each location.

This legislation broadens the ability of HCC police officers to exercise their authority in the event they are pursuing a suspected offender, helping with traffic flow, or as ordered by the Governor. This bill does not circumvent or supercede existing state law. The College has entered into reciprocity agreements with Washington County Public Schools, Meritus Healthcare, and Washington County Sheriff's Office in the event there is an emergency at a school or hospital location and HCC Police can respond more quickly than the County is able. The City of Hagerstown is also considering such an agreement when the College moves into its new training site on Northern Avenue later this spring.

This legislation will allow all three entities, Washington County Sheriff's Office, Hagerstown Police Department, and Hagerstown Community College to work more seamlessly together which will bring better safety to the residents of our area. The Sheriff of Washington County and the Hagerstown Police Chief both fully support this legislation and hope for its quick passage.

If I can provide any further information or assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours truly,

James S. Klauber, PhD
President