



FREDERICK COUNTY GOVERNMENT
OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

Jessica Fitzwater
County Executive

**HB 492 – Frederick County - County Employees and Volunteers - Criminal History
Records Check**

DATE: March 25, 2025
COMMITTEE: Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee
POSITION: Favorable
FROM: The Office of Frederick County Executive Jessica Fitzwater

As the County Executive of Frederick County, I urge the committee to give **HB 492 – Frederick County - County Employees and Volunteers - Criminal History Records Check** a favorable report.

HB 492 would allow for Frederick County Government (FCG) to conduct fingerprint-supported background checks on prospective and current employees that work with security sensitive subject matter.


Currently, when FCG hires an employee who works with security sensitive subject matter, the Frederick County Sheriff's Office conducts an extensive background check on this prospective employee. This current practice results in an increased workload for the Sheriff's Office and often leads to significant delays in employment. While some security sensitive positions will likely still require an extensive background check process, fingerprint-supported background checks are a viable alternative that could accelerate the process of onboarding other employees.

This legislation would reduce the burden on our Sheriff's Office and allow for them to focus on their additional important work, including their own hiring needs. The Sheriff's Office is supportive of this initiative, and their letter of support is attached below.

Allowing for fingerprint-supported background checks would also bring Frederick County into line with other jurisdictions across Maryland that currently have this ability. While prospective employees at FCG are forced to wait weeks for their background checks to return, prospective employees in other jurisdictions are able to receive their background check results in a much timelier manner due to the use of fingerprint-supported background checks. By permitting FCG to use this background check process as well, we will be better equipped to compete in the employer market.

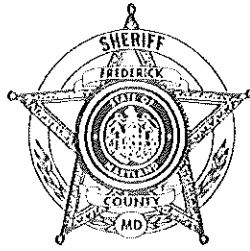
Recruiting talent for roles in local government is challenging for an array of reasons. Hiring employees for security sensitive positions is both resource and time consuming and this legislation aims to alleviate one significant impediment to timely employment.

Thank you for your consideration of HB 492. I urge you to advance this bill with a favorable report.


Jessica Fitzwater, County Executive
Frederick County, MD

FREDERICK COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

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TO: Frederick County Delegation Chair Jesse Pippy and Vice Chair Bill Folden

FROM: Lieutenant Colonel Jeff Eyler
Law Enforcement Bureau Chief

REF: HB0492 Criminal History Records Check

DATE: January 27, 2025

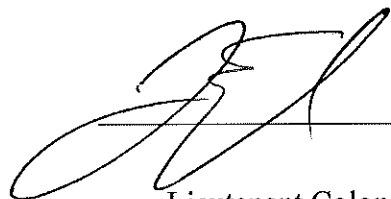
I am writing in support of proposed HB0492 that would grant Frederick County the authority to conduct fingerprint-supported background checks on prospective employees. I currently serve as the Law Enforcement Bureau Chief for the Frederick County Sheriff's Office, the agency that is responsible for conducting background checks for Frederick County Government employees.

Part of my responsibility includes the oversight of our Personnel Services Section and Background Investigation Section. Currently, the Sheriff's Office conducts extensive background investigations for prospective employees who will work with security-sensitive subject matter. While this process is necessary for certain positions, it is extremely time-consuming and places a heavy workload on the Sheriff's Office, leading to delays that can impede the hiring process. The Sheriff's Office has maintained this additional work while also completing extensive backgrounds on our own candidates selected for law enforcement

positions. While some security-sensitive positions require thorough background checks, there are many other roles within county government where a more streamlined fingerprint-supported background check would suffice.

As prevalent throughout the country, and in Frederick County, the recruitment and hiring of law enforcement officers has become more difficult than ever. Agencies are competing to hire applicants quickly and efficiently. HB0492 would not only help to expedite the hiring process for county government but it would also allow the Sheriff's Office to direct more resources to complete background checks for law enforcement positions specifically. The ability to efficiently hire more deputy sheriffs is vital in keeping Frederick County a safe place to live and work. HB0492 would help to do exactly that.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to your support and the continued success of our efforts to improve the hiring process in Frederick County.



Lieutenant Colonel Jeff Eyler

Law Enforcement Bureau Chief

Frederick County Sheriff's Office, MD