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TO: Madam Chair Bartlett

FROM: Lt. Colonel Jeff Eyler 
LE Bureau Chief

REF: HB0329- School Resource Officers

DATE: February 23, 2026

My name is Lt. Colonel Jeff Eyler, and I am the LE Bureau Chief for the Frederick County Sheriff's Office. Thank you for the opportunity to show my support for HB0329. This legislation addresses a critical issue: protecting students from sexual exploitation and abuse by individuals who are placed in positions of authority and trust within our schools. School Resource Officers play a vital role in maintaining safety, fostering positive relationships with students, and supporting school communities. With that responsibility comes a clear expectation of professional boundaries.

HB0329 strengthens Maryland law by explicitly prohibiting a law enforcement officer assigned as a school resource officer from engaging in sexual contact or sexual acts with a student enrolled in that school. While such conduct is unethical and *may* violate departmental policy, this bill ensures that the law clearly reflects the seriousness of this abuse of power.

Students are uniquely vulnerable. The presence of a law enforcement officer in a school carries inherent authority, influence, and control. Any sexual relationship between a school resource officer and a student—regardless of perceived consent—represents an imbalance of power that undermines student safety and erodes trust in both law enforcement and educational institutions. This bill is not about questioning the professionalism of the vast majority of school resource officers, who serve honorably and with integrity every day. Rather, it is about accountability, clarity, and prevention. Clear statutory language helps protect students, supports ethical officers, and reinforces public confidence by making it unmistakable that such conduct will not be tolerated.

By closing gaps in existing law, HB0329 sends a strong message that Maryland is committed to safeguarding students and holding those in positions of authority to the highest standards of conduct. For these reasons, I respectfully urge a favorable report on HB0329. Thank you for your time and consideration.