



State of Maryland
Department of State Police
Government Affairs Section
Annapolis Office (410) 260-6100

POSITION ON PROPOSED LEGISLATION

DATE: February 11, 2020

BILL NUMBER: House Bill 42 **POSITION:** Letter of Information

BILL TITLE: Public Information Act – Applications for Inspection – responses and Time Limits

REVIEW AND ANALYSIS:

This legislation seeks to reduce the time frame for a custodian of records to respond to an application to inspect a public record. If the application is approved the custodian shall produce the public record immediately or within a reasonable period of time, no later than 7 days after receipt of the application.

The Maryland Department of State Police (MDSP) receives thousands of requests for records each year. According to the *Final Report on the Public Information Act* dated December 27, 2019, MDSP denied only 5% of all requests. Under the timelines established in current law, the MDSP responded to 93% of all requests in under 30 days. House Bill 42 would make it difficult for any custodian to comply with the new time lines.

MDSP is committed to being open and transparent with the public and the communities we serve. MDSP provides access to the public while protecting Personally Identifiable Information in accordance with all laws and regulations. Allowing the public to request and inspect documents under the Public Information Act (PIA) is a vital element of the public's trust in our governmental institutions.

MDSP works in good faith to provide timely and cost-efficient responses, while also balancing the legal and ethical obligations to protect personal and proprietary information.