



THE PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY GOVERNMENT

OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

BILL: House Bill 380 – Public Information Act – Denial of Part of a Public Record – Investigations by Inspectors General

SPONSOR: Delegate R. Lewis

HEARING DATE: February 11, 2020

COMMITTEE: Health and Government Operations

CONTACT: Intergovernmental Affairs Office, 301-780-8411

POSITION: SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENTS

The Office of the Prince George's County Executive **SUPPORTS House Bill 380 - Public Information Act – Denial of Part of a Public Record – Investigations by Inspectors General**, which denies inspections of records of investigations conducted by or compiled by an inspector general whose office is created by state law or the laws of a political subdivision of the state.

While this bill adequately protects investigations conducted by inspector generals, it does not protect investigations conducted by Offices of Ethics and Accountability created by the laws of a political subdivision of the state which conduct similar investigations. The Prince George's County Office of Ethics and Accountability (OEA) was created in 2012 to investigate fraud, waste, abuse, and illegal acts in County government. Similar to records maintained by inspector generals, there is a legitimate operational interest to prevent the disclosure of the identity of a confidential source and the disclosure of investigative techniques or procedures.

The OEA allows anonymous reporting of allegations of fraud, waste, abuse, and illegal acts and has been able to successfully investigate and substantiate certain allegations while maintaining the confidentiality of the reporters. Preventing the disclosure of investigation records will maintain the confidentiality of the reporters and other witnesses who may have been instrumental in substantiating the allegations.

The OEA refers criminal activity to the appropriate law enforcement authorities and supports preventing the interference with a valid and proper law enforcement proceeding.

For the reasons stated above, the Office of the Prince George's County Executive **SUPPORTS House Bill 380 WITH AMENDMENTS** and asks for a **FAVORABLE** report.