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February 6, 2020

Chairman Willaim C. Smith, Jr.
Judicial Proceedings Committee
2 East
Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: Senate Bill 272: State Commission on Criminal Sentencing Policy – Annual Report – Crimes of Violence (The Judicial Transparency Act of 2020)

POSITION: Support

Dear Chairman Smith and Members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee,

The Governor's Office of Crime Prevention, Youth, and Victim Services is providing this letter of support for Senate Bill 272: State Commission on Criminal Sentencing Policy – Annual Report – Crimes Violence (The Judicial Transparency Act of 2020).

This legislation requires the State Commission on Criminal Sentencing Policy to include new information to their existing annual report. If this legislation is enacted, the report shall now include, for each crime of violence as defined in § 14–101 of the Criminal Law Article the following: (1) the crime of which the defendant was convicted, (2) the sentence imposed, (3) the applicable range of sentencing guidelines, (4) disposition of the case, (5) convictions in which a portion of the sentence is suspended, the amount of time suspended and the percentage of sentence suspended, (6) reason for departure from sentencing guidelines, if applicable, (7) court and judicial circuit with jurisdiction over the case, and (8) the sentencing judge.

For all inquiries, please contact
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The Governor's Office of Crime Prevention, Youth, and Victim Services is statutorily charged to work in consultation with the Maryland Commission of Criminal Sentencing Policy to analyze the use of American Bar Association ("ABA") pleas in calendar year 2019 based on information submitted to the Commission. Additionally, the Office is responsible for making a report at the end of 2020 regarding the use of ABA pleas. Senate Bill 272 would expand the reporting information in this existing report.

Additionally, tracking this information will bolster public confidence that members of the judiciary are holding violent criminals accountable for their actions. With the spike in violent crime throughout the state, the need for accountability in all levels of the justice system cannot be understated.

For these reasons, the Governor's Office of Crime Prevention, Youth, and Victim Services supports Senate Bill 272 and urges a favorable report.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "V. Glenn Fueston, Jr.", written in a cursive style.

V. Glenn Fueston, Jr.

Executive Director

Governor's Office of Crime Prevention, Youth, and Victim Services