



Council on American-Islamic Relations

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January 28, 2020

Honorable Delegate Luke Clippinger
Chair, House Judiciary Committee
House Office Building, Room 101
6 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

**Re: Testimony in SUPPORT of HB0128 – Law Enforcement – Department of State Police –
Body Worn Cameras**

Dear Chair Luke Clippinger, Vice Chair Vanessa Atterbeary and House Judiciary Committee Members:

On behalf of the Council on American-Islamic Relations, I thank you for this opportunity to testify in **support** of House Bill 0128 introduced by Delegates Brian Crosby et al. CAIR is America's largest Muslim civil rights and advocacy organization. Its mission is to enhance the understanding of Islam, protect civil rights, promote justice, and empower American Muslims.

Since the 2014 murder of Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri, numerous high-profile cases of lethal use of force by law enforcement officers have led to civil unrest that subsequently led the Obama administration to disburse over \$20 million in federal grants to equip agencies with body-worn cameras. By 2016, nearly half of the law enforcement agencies across America had adopted policies mandating officers to wear body-worn cameras.¹

The ability of law enforcement agencies to effectively fight crime depends significantly on public trust and on the public perception of whether law enforcement encounters and use of force is legitimate, warranted and authorized.

Research shows that private citizens generally support body-worn cameras and, they appear to reduce complaints against officers.² It also suggests that this equipment offers benefits for law enforcement.³ We support HB0128 because we believe it will help instill trust in State Police, increase public safety, and set the tone for transparency and accountability. Therefore, we respectfully urge your vote in favor of it.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

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1. <https://www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/bwclea16.pdf>
2. <https://thecrimereport.org/2019/03/25/impact-of-police-body-worn-cameras-limited-study-says/>
3. <https://nij.ojp.gov/topics/articles/body-worn-cameras-what-evidence-tells-us>