

February 7, 2020

House Judiciary Committee  
Maryland General Assembly  
Room 101  
House Office Building  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

**RE: HB0493, Conditions for Awards on Claims**

To the Members of the House Judiciary Committee:

I write to urge you to vote in favor of HB0493. First of all, not everyone has the financial ability (or knowledge of insurance law) to be fully insured for all types of property damage that may be caused by criminal acts. Damage to property can destroy a person's business, means of transportation or otherwise cause them significant harm, even without a physical or severe emotional injury.

Secondly, this bill would make the waiver of some the timely reporting and full cooperation requirements mandatory if there is good cause. There are many legitimate reasons why a person may not be able to report property damage to law enforcement quickly, or why a person may be afraid of fully cooperating with a criminal prosecution. Of course, there will be some discretion in determining whether the facts of a specific application constitute good cause, but if it is uncontested that there is good cause I see no reason to accept some such claims and not others.

Lastly, if there are concerns going forward about the financial solvency of the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board due to property crimes, I recommend the members of this body considering whether the Board would be a deserving recipient of civil asset forfeiture funds taken by state and local law enforcement entities.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Alexander A. Bush, Esq.