



# HARFORD COUNTY DEPUTY SHERIFF'S UNION

Local 838, International Union of Police Associations, AFL-CIO

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[www.hcdsu.org](http://www.hcdsu.org)

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

February 20, 2020

RE: House Bill 736 – Police Officers – Mental Health – Employee Assistance Programs

Dear Delegate Clippinger and Distinguished Members of the Judiciary Committee,

On behalf of over 300 members of the Harford County Deputy Sheriff's Union, who are current participants of the Law Enforcement Officers Pension System (LEOPS), I respectfully ask that you SUPPORT House 736.

The job of law enforcement is more difficult than ever. A police officer must be a strong teacher, counselor, writer, communicator, problem solver, mentor and peacekeeper. They must be almost robotic and professional while constantly witnessing and enduring the most terrible circumstances, but at what cost? These stressors can take a toll on police and understanding the needs to address mental health in law enforcement is more important than ever!

We, including myself, need to do more. As union leadership, I make sure deputies have safe working conditions, adequate pay and benefits, but don't spend enough time making sure resources are in place for those that need help. Law Enforcement needs a standardized system that provides an easy, streamlined process which includes counseling for crisis, stress management and peer support.

This proposed legislation begins to address these needs and provides the much-needed acknowledgment and allows for discussion and resources to assist with mental health for law enforcement.

Therefore, on behalf of the members of the Harford County Deputy Sheriff's Union, I am requesting the members of the Judiciary Committee to vote FAVORABLY in support of House Bill 736.

Sincerely,

*Aaron Penman*

Aaron Penman, President  
Harford County Deputy Sheriff's Union