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FROM THE GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF CRIME PREVENTION, YOUTH, AND VICTIM SERVICES

March 6, 2020

Chair Clippinger, Vice-Chair Atterbeary, Members of the Committee
House Judiciary Committee
Room 101
House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Re: House Bill 1166: Public Safety -Law Enforcement Diversion Programs

POSITION: Letter of Information

Dear Chair Clippinger and Members of the Committee,

The Governor's Office of Crime Prevention, Youth, and Victim Services ("Office") is providing this letter of information for House Bill 1166: Public Safety -Law Enforcement Diversion Programs.

This legislation permits law enforcement agencies to establish a law enforcement diversion (LEAD) program in partnership with providers of behavioral health services or community organizations. Individuals may be referred to a diversion program by a law enforcement officer after the administration of medication to reverse an overdose.

LEAD is a program in which police officers are able to exercise discretionary authority at point of contact to divert individuals to a community-based harm-reduction intervention driven by unmet behavioral needs. In lieu of traditional booking and detention, individuals are referred into a trauma-informed intensive care-management program where the individual will receive behavioral health treatment.

HB1166 requires the Governor's Office of Crime Prevention, Youth, and Victim Services to provide an annual report related to implementation of LEAD programs developed by local law enforcement entities across the State. Additionally, the legislation states that the Governor may include funding in the state budget in an annual appropriation to the Office for the purpose of

funding LEAD programs. Currently, the Office is mandated to fund a LEAD program in Baltimore City, and grants are awarded for LEAD programs through the Comprehensive Opioid Abuse Site-Based Program Grant which comes from the federal government. This grant has provided resources for the state to fund nine police led diversion sites in the following locations; Cumberland, Bel Air, Westminster, Hagerstown, and Annapolis, as well as the community of Columbia in Howard County, Baltimore City, St. Mary's County and Wicomico County. Each grantee has received at least \$525,000 for LEAD over the 18 month grant cycle.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "V. Glenn Fueston, Jr.", with a stylized, cursive script.

V. Glenn Fueston, Jr.
Executive Director
Governor's Office of Crime Prevention, Youth, and Victim Services

For all inquiries, please contact
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