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BILL NO.: **HB 1166**

TITLE: Public Safety - Law Enforcement Diversion Programs

SPONSOR: Delegate Ebersole

COMMITTEE: Judiciary

POSITION: **SUPPORT**

DATE: March 6, 2020

Baltimore County **SUPPORTS** House Bill 1166 – Public Safety - Law Enforcement Diversion Programs. This bill expands the Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion Program to include counties throughout the State, overseen by the Governor’s Office of Crime Control and Prevention (GOCCP).

Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion (LEAD) is an effective approach to law enforcement that operates in conjunction with providers of behavioral health services to reduce recidivism rates and curtail the overcrowding of our prisons. Prisons have been shown to criminalize individuals convicted of low-level offenses, increasing the likelihood that they will one day return, a life sentence in its own right. By diverting these individuals to behavioral health programs, LEAD ensures that certain convictions do not carry negative lifelong consequences, and turns them into opportunities to learn and grow.

According to the National Institute of Corrections, LEAD programs have reduced recidivism by 22% nationwide. Baltimore County supports programs that seek to rehabilitate as opposed to punish, and stands behind legislation that promotes a society designed to learn from its mistakes.

Accordingly, Baltimore County requests a **FAVORABLE** report on HB 1166. For more information, please contact Chuck Conner, Chief Legislative Officer, at 443-900-6582.