

Arielle Juberg
Baltimore, Maryland
District 8

Testimony in Support of Bill SB0627, Law Enforcement Officers' Bill of Rights - Repeal and Procedures for Discipline

To: Chair Smith and members of the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee

From: Arielle Juberg

My name is Arielle Juberg. I am a resident of Baltimore County in District 8. I belong to Showing Up for Racial Justice in Baltimore. I am testifying in support of SB0627, Law Enforcement Officers' Bill of Rights - Repeal and Procedures for Discipline. I am joining thousands of Marylanders and over 75 organizations in the state calling for this repeal.

The matters you consider here in the Judicial Proceedings Committee are often zero-sum; if one party gains, another party loses. If someone commits theft, a store owner loses property. In this case, when police officers gain special rights, communities lose knowledge, accountability, and trust. Every day, as a result of the Law Enforcement Officers' Bill of Rights (LEOBR), communities lose:

- Information about misconduct investigations
- The ability to hold a law enforcement officer accountable for misconduct
- Trust that law enforcement officers will uphold the law and carry out responsibilities with respect for the community

It is worth repeating that LEOBR gives law enforcement officers special rights that ordinary Marylanders do not have. Repealing LEOBR would provide officers with the same workplace rights as every state and local government employee.

The consequences of LEOBR are visible throughout Maryland where trust and communication between law enforcement and communities is fraying. In Baltimore, LEOBR contributed to the case of Baltimore Officer Wesley Cagle, who was convicted on first-degree assault charges for shooting an unarmed man but served on the police force for a further two years between the shooting and his conviction. When you are considering SB0627, I ask you to think about the zero-sum bargain in LEOBR and what Maryland communities lose when law enforcement officers receive special rights.

A complete repeal of LEOBR is urgently needed so Marylanders can know that law enforcement agencies are taking police discipline seriously and not protecting officers who engage in misconduct. I respectfully urge a favorable report for Bill SB0627.