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BILL NO.: **SB 23**

TITLE: Conditions of Pretrial Release - Home Detention Monitoring

SPONSOR: Senator Hettleman

COMMITTEE: Judicial Proceedings

POSITION: **SUPPORT**

DATE: February 3, 2021

Baltimore County **SUPPORTS** Senate Bill 23 – Conditions of Pretrial Release - Home Detention Monitoring. This legislation would eliminate monitoring fees for defendants in private home detention who qualify as indigent individuals.

When Baltimore County eliminated local monitoring fees earlier this month, it was in response to the financial burden the pandemic has placed on residents. Burdensome monitoring fees can be crippling for low-income residents as is, and only compounds with financial setbacks and rising unemployment being felt across the country.

Eliminating these fees is also a question of fairness. Home monitoring fees are imposed on defendants who have not yet been convicted of a crime. In its current form, the policy imposes a financial penalty on individuals who are awaiting adjudication of non-violent crime charges. Residents need to be able to support themselves and their families without fear of being punished for simply being accused of a crime.

By eliminating defendants who qualify as indigent individuals from home monitoring fees, this legislation would ensure that the State does not take money from those residents who need it the most. No one should suffer additional financial burdens during this time of need.

Accordingly, Baltimore County requests a **FAVORABLE** report on SB 23. For more information, please contact Chuck Conner, Director of Government Affairs, at cconner@baltimorecountymd.gov.