

**Testimony for the House Judiciary Committee
February 9, 2021**

**HB 120 – Public Information Act – Personnel Records – Investigations of Law
Enforcement Officers (Anton’s Law)**

FAVORABLE

To Chairman Clippinger, Vice Chair Atterbeary, and Committee members,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit my testimony on HB 120. My name is Marion Gray-Hopkins. I am a lifelong resident of Maryland, a registered voter, President of Coalition of Concerned Mothers, an organization of grieving mothers, many who have loss children to police terrorism. I am also a member of the Prince Georges County Peoples Coalition for Justice, the Mid-Atlantic Regional Executive for Families United for Justice and a supporter of many local and national organizations who are fighting for police reform. My son, Gary Hopkins, Jr. at the young age of 19 was a casualty of police terrorism, nearly 20 years ago on November 27, 1999. The fight for justice, accountability and transparency has been a long time fight and journey for me and so many others. Police misconduct has been going on for decades and continues to plague communities across this country; with little to no accountability or transparency. We have loss trust in law enforcement and a way to bridge the gap and begin rebuilding the relationship with the community they serve is to be transparent. HB 120 will help to do that. Police departments are paid by our tax dollars and because of that the complainant and the community should be given full disclosure when complaints are made (all aspects of the investigation). We are not asking for personnel info however we should know and we want to know that our complaints are being handled equitably and fairly for ALL people; that appropriate actions are being taken based on the complexity/seriousness of the complaint. If there is nothing to hide and complaints are being handled properly, why not share the information. It will help the community and ally organizations with identifying “the few bad apples”.

With a greater focus across the country on the issue of police terrorism and with a new administration in the White House talking about bringing back law and order it should include implementation of legislation such as HB 120. As a mother, a grandmother, law abiding US citizen, and a voice for many mothers, we are tired of losing our children to excessive use of force, some resulting in unjustifiable homicides, being harassed, racially profiled, brutalized,

and disrespected by those who are paid and sworn to protect and serve the community. What we are seeing is law enforcement being protected by laws that don't protect us.

We are pushing for the expeditious and timely passage of HB 120 as a "Common-Sense" measure designed to help identify police misconduct patterns and root out bad actors before more Black and Brown people will be brutalized, assaulted, and killed in our communities. In addition, HB 120 will help build trust between the community and Law-Enforcement. To do that, we must have a more transparent and accountable system to the citizenry that funds it.

Sincerely,

Marion Gray-Hopkins