



Maryland Chiefs of Police Association Maryland Sheriffs' Association



MEMORANDUM

TO: The Honorable Luke Clippinger Chairman and
Members of the Judiciary Committee

FROM: Chief David Morris, Co-Chair, MCPA, Joint Legislative Committee
Sheriff Darren Popkin, Co-Chair, MSA, Joint Legislative Committee
Andrea Mansfield, Representative, MCPA-MSA Joint Legislative Committee

DATE: March 25, 2021

RE: **SB 599 Maryland Police Accountability Act of 2021 – Surplus Military Equipment**

POSITION: **SUPPORT**

The Maryland Chiefs of Police Association (MCPA) and the Maryland Sheriffs' Association (MSA) **SUPPORT SB 599** as amended. This bill would prohibit law enforcement agencies from obtaining a weaponized aircraft, drone, or vehicle; and other items from a federal military surplus program.

SB 599, as amended, mirrors federal regulations for the federal military surplus program. Current federal regulations prohibit the transfer of weaponized vehicles to state and local governments; and local law enforcement agencies do not acquire destructive devices, firearm silencers, or grenade launchers.

The federal military surplus program enables law enforcement agencies to obtain equipment at little or no cost to the agency, protecting lives of officers and citizens at minimal expense. Many agencies benefit from acquiring armored vehicles through this program. Just recently in Howard County a man shot at the driver's side window of an armored vehicle as law enforcement approached to serve a search warrant. If it were not for the bulletproof glass in the vehicle, the officer would have been shot. These are occurrences that officers experience daily in their jobs.

As amended, HB 599 would allow law enforcement agencies to continue acquiring armored vehicles in a cost effective manner protecting the lives of officers and the community at large. For these reasons, MCPA and MSA **SUPPORT** HB 599 as amended by the Senate and urge a **FAVORABLE** report.