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March 25, 2021

To: The Honorable Luke Clippinger  
Chair, Judiciary Committee

From: Office of the Attorney General

Re: SB0599 – Public Safety – Surplus Military Equipment – Prohibition on Purchase by Law  
Enforcement Agencies

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The Attorney General urges the Judiciary Committee to issue a favorable report on Senate Bill 599. Senate Bill 599 prohibits law enforcement agencies from acquiring certain surplus military equipment like weaponized vehicles, destructive devices, and grenade launchers. Studies have shown that when law enforcement agencies acquire military-style equipment, there is an increase in SWAT deployments and police violence, with no corresponding decrease in violent crime. The use of military equipment also perpetuates community distrust and damages the relationship between the police and the people they serve.

Senate Bill 599 strikes the appropriate balance by allowing law enforcement to take advantage of surplus military equipment programs to obtain non-weaponized items such as office equipment and traffic enforcement equipment, while prohibiting the acquisition of weapons of war that contribute to the militarization of police departments.

The Attorney General urges the Judiciary Committee to issue a favorable report on Senate Bill 599.

cc: Committee Members