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TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION OF Bill SB0626, Law Enforcement Officers - Use of Force
Mar 23, 2021
TO: Chair Clippinger, Vice Chair Atterbeary, and members of the Judiciary Committee
FROM: Chris Apple

I am Chris Apple, I live in Columbia in District 13. This testimony is in opposition of Bill SB626 unless amended as below.

Between 2015 and 2019, there were almost 23,000 use of force incidents in Baltimore alone, a rate of about 12 per day.¹ Yet despite the prevalence of these incidents, Maryland is one of only nine states without a statewide use of force law.

Maryland needs a Use of Force policy that meets international standards, but SB626 falls short of real, meaningful change. I would like to see SB626 modified to look exactly like the Use of Force language in HB670. I applaud the House Judiciary Committee for the Use of Force requirements it designed in HB670. This language will create a much stronger statute which will give Marylanders badly-needed protections and create a unified policy for police departments to follow.

I respectfully urge you to vote unfavorably for SB626, unless amended with Use of Force language from HB670.

¹ Spielberger, Joe. *Chasing Justice*. Baltimore, 2021.
<https://www.aclu-md.org/en/publications/chasing-justice-addressing-police-violence-and-corruption-maryland>