

05 February 2021

**Bill:** HB0120 - Anton's Law

**Position:** Favorable

A simple change with a significant impact: transparency and accountability for public servants with a highly public facing role. By making administrative and criminal investigations of misconduct personnel records, the State has heretofore denied plaintiffs the right of knowledge of the disposition or resolution of their complaint. By shielding such records from public access, the State also privileges officers, whose conduct may violate the law they are sworn to uphold and enforce, from the scrutiny and accountability to which private citizens and other employees of the State are subject.

Making this adjustment need not result in a flood of new complaints against officers, and should not be perceived as an attack on their integrity or right to privacy. Rather it is an acknowledgement that as public servants with unique powers and potential for harm - even if unintentional - there is a compelling interest in certain dispositions and proceedings to be publicly available in order for their treatment to be just. Making this so by default serves the public far better than the current law. It also increases the credibility of the complaint process, providing better insight into department culture and practice, as well as individual officer behavior for other potential departments to which they move (increasing public safety in cases of officers with significant negative records).

Edmund Morris

*He/Him/His*

Secretary

LGBTQ Democrats of Montgomery County