

**Testimony for the House Judiciary Committee**

**February 9, 2021**

**HB 151–Law Enforcement Officers’ Bill of Rights –Repeal**

**FAVORABLE**

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

My name is Tawanda Jones and I reside in the 45<sup>th</sup> Legislative District of Baltimore City. I am writing to offer my support for HB151 for the repeal of LEOBR and enhancing the procedures of discipline for Law Enforcement Officers.

For the last 393 weeks, I have been fighting for justice for my Brother, Tyrone West. Tyrone was brutally murdered by 11-15 officers in broad daylight in a residential neighborhood in my district. For the last 7 and a half years, my family has endured corruption that should be considered criminal, as well as every form of road block you can imagine on our journey to accountability and justice. From a biased and corrupted Medical Examiner’s autopsy findings, to corrupted and biased State Attorneys that refuse to perform the duties they are assigned when they are elected into office. My family has jumped through every hoop placed in front of us, and to no avail. One of the things hindering any kind of justice and accountability is the LEOBR.

The LEOBR offers up protections to the police that gives them an unlimited license to assault, beat, maim, and even kill our citizens. It allows for repeat offenders with badges to permeate the police force, obtain promotions, and corrupt all of their fellow officers around them. Since they are shielded from any repercussions or accountability, they are literally above the law and participate in crime and killing sprees all across our City and State. This needs to stop. The only way to stop this madness is to completely repeal the LEOBR and have a disciplinary procedure that is more like it is for regular folks.

Police officers who break the law should be investigated, arrested, charged, and tried just like the rest of us. The shield of silence and allowance for chronic abuses at the hands of police officers needs to be removed by fully repealing the LEOBR. The LEOBR has made police

officers so comfortable with the State's Attorney's office because they know that they will be shielded. The State's Attorney uses the LEOBR as an excuse to not perform a proper investigation or prosecution of police officers. In fact, the State's Attorney goes so far as to put the onus of finding "more evidence" onto the families of the victims. Marilyn Mosby directed **ME** to provide more evidence in order for her to reopen my brother's case! How is that My responsibility? Isn't that part of her investigative powers?

There are countless families in Baltimore City, the State of MD, in fact across the country who wait in vain for accountability and justice. This needs to stop. Repeal the LEOBR and open up the opportunity for all of the cases of police involved murders to be investigated and prosecuted thoroughly and properly, without any obstacles or excuses from those with the power to perform these duties. Enough is enough!

There is no statute of limitations on murder. No one that participates in a murder should be shielded from accountability because of what their occupation is. No One! That includes police officers. They yield so much power and weapons that they should be held to a higher standard of conduct, not shielded from responsibility for their actions of brutality against citizens.

Tyrone deserves Justice. All victims of police brutality do, please repeal the LEOBR and pass this bill on to the full Senate and House for passage into Law.

Thank you,

**Tawanda Jones**  
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