



Testimony on HB151
Law Enforcement Officers' Bill of Rights - Repeal
Position: FAVORABLE

Dear Mr. Chair and Members of the Judiciary Committee,

My name is Ricarra Jones, and I am the Political Director with 1199SEIU- the largest healthcare union in the nation, where we represent over 10,000 healthcare workers in Maryland. Given the egregious actions of misconduct and lack of transparency by police departments all over Maryland, we support the full repeal of the Law Enforcement Officers' Bill of Rights.

In Maryland, no matter the county, a deep layer and disproportionate amount of police brutality and special treatment occurs daily. For minority localities such as Baltimore City and Prince George's County, police misconduct tends to run even more rampant because minorities tend to be targeted more than non-minorities. For some police officers, they intentionally go into minority communities to meet their quotas of tickets and arrests, resulting in over-policing. For many minority communities that struggle with healthcare disparities and other socio-economic challenges, targeting like this only exacerbates the problems that many minorities face in our State.

In addition to police brutality where police have used excessive force for the most minor of offenses, many of these instances have led to deaths. For this reason, we believe that police transparency is also a huge issue that this bill appropriately tackles. Currently, police records are protected under the Law Enforcement Officers' Bill of Rights, which in practice increases the number of bad cops in communities. Officers who have records of variations of police misconduct are not only able to continue to police communities, but the public has no way of knowing what officers

For 1199SEIU members- a majority of whom are minorities- this Act is vital for the well-being of our members and communities. Not only would this Act increase the safety in minority communities, but we believe that the level of confidence and transparency would greatly increase in communities of color.

For this reason, we believe that this repeal will create the necessary structure in place to protect more Marylanders from police abuse and misconduct in Maryland. We ask this Committee to give this legislation HB151 a favorable report.

Respectfully,

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