



## Maryland Municipal League

*The Association of Maryland's Cities and Towns*

# TESTIMONY

February 15, 2021

**Committee:** House Judiciary

**Bill:** HB 1049 – Police Qualified Immunity and Accountability Act

**Position:** Oppose

**Reason for Position:**

The Maryland Municipal League opposes House Bill 1049. This measure limits a police officer's personal liability to \$25,000, transferring liability for the remaining economic and noneconomic damages solely to the officer's employer, which includes many municipalities. Local governments are already obligated under the Local Government Tort Claims Act to defend employees acting within the scope of their employment, for which we have insurance. Increasing our liability would increase those insurance premiums for all municipalities, even those without police departments. This would place a significant financial burden on local governments.

This measure also effectively raises the caps for the economic and noneconomic damages for which local governments would be liable. The caps referred to in the bill are for damages typically meant for non-governmental defendants. Local governments are governed instead by the LGTCA, which has its own unique parameters and lower caps. By requiring damages to comply with the sections cited in this bill, caps on local government liability are significantly raised.

For these reasons, the Maryland Municipal League opposes HB 1049 and respectfully requests an unfavorable committee report.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:**

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