



February 3, 2021

The Honorable Luke Clippinger
Chairman, House Judiciary Committee
Room 101, House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: SUPPORT of HB 120 / SB 178

(Public Information Act – Personnel Records – Investigations of Law Enforcement Officers
(Anton’s Law))

Dear Committee Chair Clippinger and members of the House Judiciary Committee:

We of the Baltimore Asian Resistance in Solidarity (BARS) are writing to you in support of House Bill 120 / Senate Bill 178 to increase transparency and accountability for law enforcement in Maryland.

Formed in response to police brutality against Michael Brown and Freddie Gray in the winter of 2015, BARS brings together Asians and Pacific Islanders of all backgrounds in Baltimore to work in solidarity with our neighbors and the communities we share: Black, Indigenous, POC, LGBTQIA+, women, working class, disabled folks, incarcerated people, immigrants and refugees. As residents of Baltimore, we are highly aware of the dangers of the lack of accountability for law enforcement. The police system as it exists doesn’t protect or provide justice to anyone, least of all our Black and Brown neighbors, and we need meaningful and bold changes.

We support HB120/SB178 because:

- Greater transparency will create better trust between our communities and law enforcement. The lack of transparency spurs distrust, since police officers’ prior misconduct may be hidden from the public. Law enforcement officers have greater responsibility as an actor of the government and of the law and as such, we should apply greater scrutiny to their actions.
- Greater accessibility to this information will allow the public to keep a better track of police officers’ behavior over time and across jurisdictions. . As Howard Zinn wrote, “If you don’t know history, it’s as if you were born yesterday.” Knowledge of each officer’s past investigated actions will help establish patterns of behavior to ultimately improve the quality of our police officers.

We urge the House Judiciary Committee to find House Bill 120 “Anton’s Law” Favorable.

For more information about Baltimore Asian Resistance in Solidarity or this position, please contact baltimoreasianresistanceinsolidarity@gmail.com.

Sincerely,
Baltimore Asian Resistance in Solidarity (BARS)