



PROGRESSIVE MARYLAND

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February 5, 2021

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF:

Anton's law: HB 120, SB178

Repeal LEOBR: HB 151

Statute of limitations of the use of Force: HB 139

Dear Honorable Senators and Delegates of the Judiciary Proceedings Committee:

My name is Sharity Bannerman and I am a member of the Progressive Maryland's Justice Task Force. I am a resident of Upper Marlboro, Maryland. Police violence has destroyed the lives of many Maryland residents and inflicted trauma on their family and friends. We must end the practice of police policing themselves and communities must be able to hold police accountable.

Each of these bills are important to me and my community for a variety of reasons. After the deaths of Freddie Gray, George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and many others who have died as a result of police brutality and deadly police force, we must change our law enforcement and its practices to protect citizens especially Black citizens. I believe these laws are great steps in the right direction. Anton's Law HB 120, SB 178 will bring more transparency in the investigations of police-involved incidents and killings, where MPIA will permit the general public to see any past complaints, in order to conduct a full investigation. Especially with murder being such a high crime, it is important all evidence is available. Maryland residents have the right to see patterns of police misconduct as well as learn the outcome of any police complaint or investigation including consequences. In addition, we must enact Repeal LEOBR HB 151 because LEOBR is granting police amnesty and a license to kill. LEOBR provides police time to gather their thoughts to prepare testimony by delaying interrogation for 5 days, puts a year time limit on filing complaints, and allows police officers to investigate other police officers. We need to hold law enforcement more accountable because at this rate they protect each other more than the civilians.

Lastly, Statute of Limitations Use of Force HB 139 will help limit the egregious, excessive force that has been plaguing Brown and Black communities in our state. We must implement this bill in order to save lives. Please vote yes to all these bills in order to reform our state and literally save the lives of Maryland citizens.

Sincerely,

Sharity Bannerman, Esq.