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County Executive

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BILL NO.: **HB 956**

TITLE: Criminal Procedure - Law Enforcement Procedures - Use of Force

SPONSOR: Delegate Washington

COMMITTEE: Judiciary

POSITION: **SUPPORT**

DATE: February 15, 2021

Baltimore County **SUPPORTS** House Bill 956 – Criminal Procedure - Law Enforcement Procedures - Use of Force. This legislation would restrict the use of chokeholds and other neck restraints and require officers to intervene if they see these methods being employed.

When Baltimore County passed the SMART Policing Act, one of its most critical components was the restriction of the use of chokeholds by law enforcement. Chokeholds have deservedly come under scrutiny in recent years following the tragic killings of George Floyd, Eric Garner, and many others. Police officers are trained to subdue suspects in a variety of ways that do not pose risks to their health or their lives. When procedures become more harmful than protective to public safety, it is the duty of leaders to reform policing practice in favor of more effective, safer methods.

County Executive Olszewski is committed to rooting out practices that counter public health and safety, especially those that disproportionately impact communities of color. By imposing similar restrictions as those outlined in the County’s SMART Policing Act, HB 956 will effectively promote safe policing procedures and foster trust in law enforcement and local government.

Accordingly, Baltimore County requests a **FAVORABLE** report on HB 956. For more information, please contact Chuck Conner, Director of Government Affairs, at cconner@baltimorecountymd.gov.