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# MARYLAND STATE LODGE FRATERNAL ORDER OF POLICE®

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February 28, 2021

## **House Bill 1089: Primary and Secondary Education – Expansion of Mental Health Services and Prohibition of School Resource Officers (Police-Free Schools Act) (OPPOSE)**

Dear Chairwoman Kaiser and Distinguished Members of the House Ways and Means Committee,

As President of the Maryland Fraternal Order of Police and on behalf of all law enforcement officers throughout the State of Maryland, we respectfully ask that you **OPPOSE** House Bill 1089: Primary and Secondary Education – Expansion of Mental Health Services and Prohibition of School Resource Officers (Police-Free Schools Act) and vote **UNFAVORABLY**.

This bill attempts to abolish the Baltimore City School Police Force (B.S.P.) and prevent all local jurisdictions from establishing their own school police force. The bill also prevents all local school systems from contracting with local law enforcement agencies to provide uniformed police services.

Along with serving as the current President of the Maryland State Fraternal Order of Police, I have the honor of serving as the local union president for the Baltimore City School Police Force. I have spent 20 years in law enforcement in Maryland, with the last 18 years as a Baltimore City School Police Officer, attaining the rank of Sergeant.

The Baltimore City School Police Force was established in 1967, and we have concurrent jurisdiction with the Baltimore Police Department. Our daily task is to ensure that students and staff have safe, secure learning environments for teaching and learning. B.S.P.'s motto is "Protecting Our Future."

Approximately 73% of our officers are current Baltimore City residents, and around 92% of our officers were educated in the Baltimore City School System. We serve as coaches, mentors, class advisors, and advocates on behalf of the students. We are active in the community, and we sponsor three free camps attended by Baltimore City students.

All of our officers are Nationally Certified School Resource Officers by The National Association of School Resource Officers (N.A.S.R.O.); we are also trained in De-Escalation, Community Conferencing, Mindfulness, Implicit Bias, D.A.R.E., G.R.E.A.T. and a list of other best practices for our profession.

*Representing the Professional Police Officers of the State of Maryland*

As a highly trained police department, we have seen our arrest numbers decrease to an average of 60 arrests per year for the entire district for three consecutive school years. Also, we have had **NOT ONE** single complaint to the civilian review board for Baltimore City for excessive force in that time frame.

The hard-working men and women who make up the B.S.P. have an estimated combined total of 1,725 years of service to Baltimore's citizens. We are committed to serving the 80,000 + students and the 10,000 + employees of the Baltimore City School System.

For these reasons, the Maryland Fraternal Order of Police would ask for an **UNFAVORABLE** report from the House Ways and Means Committee and that you **OPPOSE** passage of House Bill 1089.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Clyde Boatwright", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Clyde E. Boatwright  
President