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BILL NO.: **SB 74**

TITLE: Police Officers – Mental Health – Employee Assistance Programs

SPONSOR: Senator Washington

COMMITTEE: Judicial Proceedings

POSITION: **SUPPORT**

DATE: January 20, 2021

Baltimore County **SUPPORTS** Senate Bill 74 – Police Officers – Mental Health – Employee Assistance Programs. This legislation would require each law enforcement agency to provide access to employee assistance programs or programs meant to address the mental health issues of police officers related to personal and work-related concerns.

Promoting the health and safety of Baltimore County residents requires ensuring the mental and physical health of the public servants charged with protecting them. The taxing duties of law enforcement officers can take a toll on mental health and as a result have potentially significant adverse impacts on their personal and professional lives. Conversely, interruptions in the personal lives of law enforcement may have similarly adverse impacts on their job performance. Adequate access to services that seek to address these issues is not simply a question of providing a service to government employees, it is one of public safety.

SB 74 seeks to address the problem by mandating the implementation of a program that facilitates access to key mental health services for law enforcement personnel. Baltimore County already has such a program and has seen its success in improving the day to day lives of its officers and residents firsthand.

Accordingly, Baltimore County requests a **FAVORABLE** report on SB 74. For more information, please contact Chuck Conner, Director of Government Affairs, at cconner@baltimorecountymd.gov.