



GOVERNOR'S COORDINATING OFFICES

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January 19, 2022

Chair Guy Gazzone
Senate Budget and Taxation Committee
Miller Senate Office Building, 3 West Wing
11 Bladen St
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: SB 127 - Public Safety – Police Athletic League Grant Fund – Establishment

Dear Chair Guzzone and Members of the Budget and Taxation Committee,

The Governor's Office of Crime Prevention, Youth, and Victim Services is providing this letter of information for Senate Bill 127: Public Safety – Police Athletic League Grant Fund – Establishment.

This legislation establishes the Police Athletic League (PAL) Grant Fund to provide grant assistance to local governments and organizations to create and support police athletic league programs; requires the Executive Director of the Governor's Office of Crime Prevention, Youth, and Victim Services to administer and establish procedures for the Fund; and provides that for each fiscal year the Governor shall include in the annual budget bill an appropriation of \$1,000,000 for the fund. The bill defines Police Athletic Programs as programs operated by local governments or organizations that are designed to build relationships among youth, police, and the community by offering educational and extracurricular activities to participating youth with the goal of preventing juvenile crime.

The Office works closely with the Boys & Girls Clubs of Maryland and Police Athletic Leagues to provide youth programming aligned with priority areas identified within the Maryland Criminal Intelligence Network (MCIN), which targets the dismantling of gangs and violent criminal networks. PAL programs in MCIN-designated areas provide an alternative, safe place for youth whose lives have been impacted by violence and other traumatic circumstances. That trauma, also known as Adverse Childhood Experiences or ACES, has been shown to have a direct correlation between physical, psychological or substance use disorders later in life, and have been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

To address this, in FY21, the Office contributed \$450,000 to the Boys & Girls Clubs of Metropolitan Baltimore, Inc. to be used at four BGC sites in Baltimore City. Much of this funding went towards partnerships between the Club and local Police Athletic Leagues. Governor Hogan included an additional \$450,000 in the FY22 budget to be used for expanding the programming of Boys & Girls Clubs and their

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participation with Police Athletic Leagues.

In addition, the Governor announced Project Bounce Back in May of 2021, which is a \$25 Million Public-Private Partnership to Support Youth Recovery From COVID-19. This series of initiatives will provide strategic mental health services, expand the footprint of youth development programs, and develop an innovative, data-driven digital solution to build post-COVID resilience among Maryland's youth, families, and communities. Through Project Bounce Back, the Maryland Alliance of Boys & Girls Clubs will expand to every county in Maryland, prioritizing Title 1 school districts and rural communities, to reach 45,000 children across all jurisdictions with youth development programs and positive mentorship. As part of this expansion, the state is launching a new partnership between the Maryland State Police and the Maryland Alliance of Boys & Girls Clubs to promote positive mentorships and grow community and police relationships, similar to the work of the Police Athletic League.

With the mental health and well-being of Maryland's youth being heavily impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, PAL programming with Boys & Girls Clubs and Police Athletic Leagues are vital in our youth outreach efforts to ensure a Safer Maryland.

Please feel free to reach out to the Office for further information as needed.

Sincerely,

V. Glenn Fueston, Jr.

Executive Director

Governor's Office of Crime Prevention, Youth, and Victim Services

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