

February 15, 2022

Carol Stern

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**TESTIMONY ON SB441 - POSITION: FAVORABLE**  
**Baltimore City - Civilian Review Board**

TO: Chair Smith, Vice Chair Waldstreicher, and members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee

FROM: Carol Stern

My name is Carol Stern, and I am testifying in **favor of Civilian Review Board SB 441**, as a resident of Montgomery County's District 16 and a member of Adat Shalom Reconstructionist Congregation in Bethesda.

The Jewish text that shapes my religious and moral conviction that the legislature should implement true civilian oversight of local police departments is from Genesis Chapter 1, where we learn that **humans are created in God's image - B'tselem Elohim. We all contain the divine spark, and we all deserve to be treated with respect and dignity.** "We must respect the integrity of every human being be it that of a friend or stranger, child or adult." When we are working to reform our criminal justice system, we must demand that it operates in accordance with these deeply held Jewish beliefs.

During the 2021 legislative session, the General Assembly passed historic police reforms, including mandating a Police Accountability Board (PAB) in each local jurisdiction. These PABs intend to provide some community oversight over local police departments. Baltimore City already has a Civilian Review Board (CRB), established in 1999 by the state, to provide greater accountability and oversight of policing. The CRB should serve as the PAB and no change is needed.

**I respectfully urge a favorable report on SB441.**