

## **SB0896-Office of the Attorney General – Independent Investigations – Revisions**

### **Stance: Favorable with Amendments**

**Testimony:** My name is Jared Ramirez and I reside in the 45th Legislative District covering Northeast Baltimore City. I am writing in support for Senate Bill 896, but with some Amendments. I have watched the last several years from the Freddie Gray case in 2015 forward, the police literally getting away with murder. The State's Attorney's Offices in the State of Maryland seem to always decide to not prosecute police officers when they injure or kill a civilian. They always seem able to "justify" their actions, and there is no justification for beating, shooting, or chasing someone in a vehicle to their death. The current Independent Investigations Division at the Attorney General's office is now only in charge of investigating these incidents. Why aren't they allowed to also Prosecute these cases? The State's Attorneys Offices throughout the state of Maryland have repeatedly failed to prosecute rogue police officers again and again. Anton Black is another case that has had no accountability, and the Freddie Gray case serves to illustrate how the State's Attorney purposely sabotages an investigation in favor of Police officers. The only case I have witnessed be properly prosecuted was the GTTF case out of the US Attorney's office. This goes further to prove that the State's Attorney's Office is unwilling, and incapable of prosecuting these cases of misconduct and abuse of power that results in death.

I feel that an amendment should be placed on this bill that stipulates that the Attorney General should be lead prosecutor in these cases once they are investigated. There should not be a hand-off from the Attorney General's Office to any State's Attorney's Office for these cases. The various State's Attorneys across the states have failed the families of victims of Police Brutality on a consistent basis over many years. Enough is enough, because the State's Attorney's Offices are guilty of covering up these cases and sweeping them under the rug, never to be seen again. There are too many officers on the various police forces that feel justified committing misconduct as a result.

Another amendment for this bill should be that if for some reason the AG decides not to prosecute, the full investigative file should be turned over to the State Prosecutor or perhaps the US Attorney's Office for review to see if they feel they warrant a prosecution. The State's Attorneys should be kept out of the process completely, as they have already proven collusion and tendencies to cover-up police misconduct.

Lastly, my final amendment suggestion for this bill would be that the Governor provide additional funding to the AG's office for expansion of the unit to ensure that there are enough Attorneys within the office to investigate and prosecute these cases. Thank you for your time and consideration in this matter.