

MARY L. WASHINGTON, PH.D
Legislative District 43
Baltimore City

Education, Health, and
Environmental Affairs Committee

Chair
Joint Committee on Ending
Homelessness

Chair
Joint Committee on Children,
Youth, and Families



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SB 106 – BALTIMORE CITY AND PRINCE GEORGE’S COUNTY – GRANT FUNDING
– VIOLENCE PREVENTION AND COMMUNITY SERVICE

TESTIMONY OF SENATOR MARY WASHINGTON

FEBRUARY 8, 2022

Chair Smith, Vice Chair Waldstreicher, and Members of the JPR,

SB106 is a tool for the States Attorney’s offices in Prince George’s County and Baltimore City to fund non-profit organizations that work with young people at risk ages 14 -29.

The best way to address crime is to prevent it. The best prevention is by creating an environment and support system that engages young people at the critical ages when they have to make life choices. Criminal behavior is often perpetrated by people who see no other options.

This bill requires the Governor to include in the annual budget bill an appropriation of \$500,000 to the Baltimore City State’s Attorney’s Office and \$500,000 to the Prince George’s County State’s Attorney’s Office for each to provide grants to nonprofit organizations to fund violence prevention and community service initiatives.

By passing SB106, Prince George’s County and Baltimore City States Attorney’s Offices will be able to identify effective non-profit organizations to receive grant money to continue the work they do with young people at risk in their communities. The States Attorney’s offices are an appropriate and effective office to make decisions on what programs will be most impactful. The States Attorney’s Office will set the procedures for applying and establish clearly defined measurable and reporting guidelines for applicants.

By supporting community based non-profits for the purpose of teaching leadership skills, workforce development, and entrepreneurship and diversion programs; the State would be directly taking an effective, community based approach to the reduction in violence. Property crimes would reduce, dropout rates can be addressed and arrest rates can be diminished.

SB106 gives the State's Attorney's offices funding to target what they see and prioritize what techniques and programs work best. As front line experts in criminal prosecutions and behaviors, the States Attorney's offices can identify trends in criminal behavior and be proactive in prevention. The effectiveness of each program will be reported and analyzed.

The State of Maryland must fund violence and crime prevention efforts if we are ever going to see a reduction in crime. SB106 is one of many investments that needs to be made to make our communities safer and more productive.

I respectfully request a favorable report on SB 106.

In Partnership,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Mary Washington". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "M" and a stylized "W".

Senator Mary Washington
Maryland 43rd District