

Dear Members of the House Judiciary Committee,

I am a resident of MD District 46 and **I am testifying in support of HB 651.**

This bill bans no knock warrants in the State of Maryland, requiring officers to give notice of their authority and purpose before entering a house.

No-knock warrants are most notorious for the needless death and trauma that follow them. While data on these incidents is hard to collate because it's not systematically tracked by anyone, a New York Times investigation found that 81 civilians were killed in no-knock warrants between 2010 and 2016¹, and we have all seen newspaper accounts of cases like those of Breonna Taylor and Amir Locke, where violent and unannounced police raids led to totally preventable tragedy. Our homes are the one place above all others that a person, a family, should feel safe, but as long as no-knock warrants exist, anyone can be a victim of a surprise invasion by armed hostile forces.

Last year's bill removing the ability of police to seek no-knock warrants for drug cases was a positive step, but it is not enough because it still allows no-knock warrants if officers have "reasonable suspicion" that the invading police or another person might be at risk. This is a broad standard that would not necessarily have prevented the deaths and injuries that result from unannounced police raids. For example, the police who killed Breonna Taylor claimed to be looking for an armed drug dealer, and the police who killed Amir Locke were looking for a homicide suspect, both situations where police could argue that they had "reasonable suspicion" that they might face danger from suspects. But there is little if any evidence that these warrants do anything to further law enforcement aims², and the violence they often instigate does not serve the interest of justice. In addition, as with every part of the criminal justice system, the suffering that these warrants cause has disproportionately fallen upon black and brown families.

Some people argue that the traumatized survivors and slain victims left behind by these military-style police tactics are a necessary sacrifice to keep police and communities safe. But the supposed dangers of an orderly-conducted warrant service are mostly theoretical, while the harm of violent warrant service is all too real. We cannot continue to sacrifice real people based on theoretical dangers.

It is for these reasons that I am encouraging you to vote **in support of HB 651.**

Thank you for your time, service, and consideration.

Sincerely,
Lindsay Keipper
2425 Fleet St.

¹*Door-Busting Drug Raids Leave a Trail of Blood.* New York Times, March 18, 2017. Available at: <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2017/03/18/us/forced-entry-warrant-drug-raid.html>

²*There's a growing consensus in law enforcement over no-knock warrants: The risks outweigh the rewards,* CNN, February 12, 2022. Available at: <https://www.cnn.com/2022/02/12/us/no-knock-warrants-policy-bans-states/index.html>