



TESTIMONY FOR HB0524

Public Safety - Maryland Police Training and Standards Commission - Prohibition Against Certain Affiliation or Support by Police Officers

Bill Sponsor: Delegate Acevero

Committee: Judiciary

Organization Submitting: Maryland Legislative Coalition

Person Submitting: Cecilia Plante, co-chair

Position: **FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS**

I am submitting this testimony in favor of HB0524 on behalf of the Maryland Legislative Coalition. The Maryland Legislative Coalition is an association of activists - individuals and grassroots groups in every district in the state. We are unpaid citizen lobbyists, and our Coalition supports well over 30,000 members.

Our members believe that police officers should be held to the highest standards of conduct. They interface with the public every day and are charged with ensuring the safety of all residents. If they actively support extremist groups or hate groups, they cannot be counted on to ensure the safety of all residents, which means that they can't perform their duties.

This bill requires the Maryland Police Training and Standards Commission to prohibit officers from affiliating with, supporting, or advocating for white supremacist groups, causes, or ideologies or actively promoting an international or domestic extremist group that encourages illegal violent conduct.

Our members believe that this is a common-sense policy. However, there are no penalties for officers who violate this prohibition. We believe that there should be escalating penalties, from warnings, to counseling to loss of employment. We support this bill and recommend a **FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS** report in committee.