

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF BILL HB0991 - FAVORABLE
Baltimore City - Civilian Review Board

TO: Chair Clippinger, Vice Chair Moon, and
members of the Judiciary Committee

FROM: Chris Apple
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In 2021, this committee took the historic step of repealing the Law Enforcement Officers' Bill of Rights. This laid the groundwork for increasing civilian oversight and accountability for officers who choose to break the law.

Baltimore must now create a Police Accountability Board to be in compliance with the language of the repeal. While it would be possible to create a new entity to fulfill this role, I believe it is much more efficient to task the city's existing Civilian Review Board with these duties. Baltimore's CRB has been reviewing cases of misconduct by the BPD for over 20 years. They have extensive experience and many existing relationships with communities. With so much established presence in that space, they make the perfect choice to serve as the Accountability Board.

The Civilian Review Board is required by law to exist, as is the Police Accountability Board. They largely have the same responsibilities and function. If these were separate bodies, they would be largely duplicative and an inefficient use of government funds. Allowing one body to serve both functions would save money and effort. This seems like a great win-win scenario for Marylanders.

I respectfully urge the committee to issue a favorable report for HB0991. Thank you.