



City of Salisbury

Jacob R. Day, Mayor

1 March 2022

Committee: Judiciary

Testimony on: HB 1184 – Police Accountability Boards and Administrative Charging Committees
- Municipal Corporations

Position: Favorable

Dear Members of the Judiciary Committee,

As you consider the merits of **HB 1184**, I ask that you **support** this vital legislation and vote to give **HB 1184** a **Favorable Committee report**. The City of Salisbury supports HB 1184, which will allow municipalities across Maryland to create their own Police Accountability Boards and Administrative Charging Committees. This bill is crucial as it helps to foster a culture of transparency and accountability amongst law enforcement officers and members of the communities they serve.

It is imperative that our local law enforcement agencies work with the communities they serve to engender trust through communication and meaningful collaboration. Police Accountability Boards and Administrative Charging Committees are well equipped to help serve this purpose by opening the doors to dialogue and creating avenues by which citizens and civilians can engage in meaningful conversations with representatives of local government and law enforcement agencies.

As Police Accountability Boards and Administrative Charging Committees work to ensure that those protecting our communities conduct themselves in a manner that is above reproach, these bodies serve to help safeguard both our communities as well as those who have taken an oath to protect and serve us. By identifying trends in police disciplinary processes, recommending policy changes to bolster police accountability, and receiving complaints of police misconduct, these boards serve a vital role as we move to advance the cause of justice, including social justice, while embracing accountability and fostering transparency.

HB 1184 takes an essential step in ensuring that these Police Accountability Boards and Charging Committees tasked with holding municipal law enforcement officers accountable are comprised of local residents and community stakeholders. Under the current law, counties are responsible for establishing both of these bodies, and municipalities are not afforded an opportunity to establish their own boards. As a Mayor, I must ask, why should non-city residents play an integral role in investigating complaints of City residents and taking subsequent action against City police officers? I believe that our law enforcement officers should be held accountable to those they serve. In the City of Salisbury, our residents should be empowered to voice concerns and suggestions to a locally operated Police Accountability Board and Charging Committee comprised of City residents.

I ask for your **support** of this critical public safety legislation that will engender trust within our communities by empowering local municipalities.

Respectfully,

Jacob R. Day
Mayor