

Good afternoon, Chair Barnes and Vice Chair Chang and members of the Appropriation committee.

My name is Ronnie Dryden, retired Deputy Warden at ECI. At the time of Officer Gregory Collins' murder on 6/4/2001, I was Security Chief. No one at ECI could have imagined what happened when Officer Collins went missing for over 18 hours.

When Officer Collins was found murdered with gunshot wounds, we were astonished. Afterwards, a few others and I met with Lena that night at the family home with their 5 month old daughter, Sydney, who is now 22 years old and graduated from Salisbury University. It was one of the saddest moments I have had to encounter involving a work family.

We met with Maryland State Police periodically for years without any leads. However, on September 13, 2019, Michael Ingersoll (Spider) was arrested for the murder of Officer Collins, and found guilty on 6/4/2021. Ironically, 20 years to the day of the murder.

It was ruled as a line of duty death, as it was a validated hit on Officer Collins' life from the gang, DMI (Dead Men Incorporated) and carried out by a released inmate who in his words vowed to kill Collins when he got out. He did indeed carry out this heinous murder. Ingersoll rose in the ranks of DMI in return for murdering Officer Collins. This was sanctioned by Perry Roark, founder of DMI.

As a result of this senseless killing, Lena and Sydney's lives along with their extended family, as well as Officer Collins' father and family were destroyed.

Officer Collins was a former Marine, who fought in Desert Storm, as well as served as a Navy Sea Bee. At the time of Officer Collins death, he was active in the Maryland National Guard. As a matter of fact, Officer Collins had been on National Guard drills Sunday, and returned to ECI on Sunday evening on the 4 – 12 Shift and murdered on Monday morning on his way home to his family. This murder has haunted us in the Division of Correction since 2001.

Officer Collins was an excellent officer with his military background and a huge loss to the Division of Correction.

I would like to thank you for your time and ask for your support of HB 240.

Ronald B. Dryden