

Chair Smith, Vice Chair Waldstreicher, and members of the
Judicial Proceedings Committee,

I am a resident of MD District 40, living in the Medfield
neighborhood of Baltimore. **I am testifying in support of SB
758 to Amend Baltimore City's Charter for Local Control
of Police.** I am submitting this testimony as a member of
Showing Up for Racial Justice Baltimore, a group of
individuals working to move white folks as part of a multi-racial
movement for equity and racial justice in Baltimore City,
Baltimore County, and Howard County. We are also working in collaboration with our accountability
partner, the Campaign for Justice, Safety and Jobs (CJSJ).



**I believe in this issue strongly, and spent the better part of four days knocking on doors in
Baltimore this fall to get out the word about the ballot initiative.**

In 2021, the General Assembly passed legislation to reestablish BPD as a City agency provided that
Baltimore residents ratify an amendment to the City Charter. In November 2022, Baltimore residents
overwhelmingly voted in favor (82%!) of a charter amendment to transfer control of the BPD from the
State to Baltimore City. This win was the result of years of work by community members and advocates.
But, as a result, as of January 1, 2023, Baltimore City's police department is a City agency, however City
Council is still powerless to legislate much-needed reforms to the BPD.

We still don't have local control - the General Assembly has to pass [SB758/HB853](#) (Sen. Carter/Del.
Smith are the sponsors) to remove one line in the City Charter which prohibits the City Council from
infringing on the power of the Police Commissioner.

Baltimore City is still the *only* locality in Maryland and only one of two localities in the entire country that
does not have control over its own police department. Further delay of implementation of local control of
the Baltimore Police Department is unacceptable, as it unjustly limits representative democracy and
police accountability in a majority-Black city.

We cannot and will not wait any longer. The people's will, clearly expressed in the last election, must be
carried out immediately by passing SB758/HB853, which will restore legislative authority to our City
Council on June 1, 2023.

It is for these reasons that I am encouraging you to vote **favorably on Baltimore City – Control Over
Powers of Police Commissioner SB758.**

Thank you for your time, service, and consideration.

Sincerely,
Christina Nemphos
1301 W 42nd Street, Baltimore, Md 21211
Showing Up for Racial Justice Baltimore