



# Maryland Chiefs of Police Association

## Maryland Sheriffs' Association



### MEMORANDUM

**TO:** The Honorable William Smith, Jr., Chair and  
Members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee

**FROM:** Darren Popkin, Executive Director, MCPA-MSA Joint Legislative Committee  
Andrea Mansfield, Representative, MCPA-MSA Joint Legislative Committee  
Natasha Mehu, Representative, MCPA-MSA Joint Legislative Committee

**DATE:** March 21, 2023

**RE:** **SB 967** – Public Safety – Statewide DNA Database System, DNA Collection,  
Expungement, and Penalties - Alterations

**POSITION:** SUPPORT

The Maryland Chiefs of Police Association (MCPA) and the Maryland Sheriffs' Association (MSA) **SUPPORT SB 967**. This bill addresses issues associated with the DNA database statute.

The Maryland Department of State Police's Forensic Sciences Division oversees the statewide DNA database. This database has been an incredibly successful tool over the years, assisting investigators to implicate perpetrators, exonerate the falsely accused, and link serial crimes in Maryland and across state lines. MCPA and MSA believe this bill will close loopholes in the statute making the database an even more valuable tool in solving crimes.

SB 967 will ensure all samples are collected and that all collected samples have clear and achievable triggers for testing and expungement. This bill does the following:

- 1) clarifies accountability for the collection of DNA database samples;
- 2) imposes a penalty for qualifying individuals who refuse to provide a DNA database sample; and,
- 3) clarifies language that currently uses the term "arrestment" as a trigger for the analysis of DNA database samples collected from individuals who have been arrested and charged with qualifying crimes.

According to MSP, a major milestone was reached in October 2022 when the 10,000<sup>th</sup> hit associated with the Maryland DNA database was reported. For the past 3 years, there has been an average of 1,135 Maryland DNA database hits per year. These hits have led to several investigations, some of which have resulted in convictions.

MCPA and MSA support all efforts for operational improvements to make the DNA database more effective. Therefore, MCPA and MSA **SUPPORT SB 967** and request a **FAVORABLE** Committee report.