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MEMORANDUM

To: Members of the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee

From: Maryland State Bar Association (MSBA)
Shaoli Katana, Esq., Advocacy Director

Subject: Senate Bill 209 - Task Force to Study Crime Classification and Penalties

Date: February 14, 2023

Position: Support with Amendment

The Maryland State Bar Association (MSBA) supports **Senate Bill 209 - Task Force to Study Crime Classification and Penalties**. SB 209 establishes the Task Force to Study Crime Classification and Penalties to review the penalties for all criminal and civil violations in the Maryland Code, study the history and legislative intent of the classifications, study criminal classifications and penalty schemes in other states, and make recommendations regarding the current statutory scheme for criminal and civil violation in the State; and requires the Task Force to report its findings to the Governor and the General Assembly by December 31, 2024.

The MSBA represents more attorneys and judges than any other organization across the State in all practice areas. MSBA serves as the voice of Maryland's legal profession. Through its Laws Committee and various practice-specific sections, MSBA monitors and takes positions on legislation of importance to the legal profession.

The MSBA strongly supports the creation of this Task Force to engage in a broad study of crime classifications in Maryland, review trends from other jurisdictions, and provide recommendations to legislators, advocates, and stakeholders to guide comprehensive

reform in important areas such as expungements. With membership of thousands of practitioners from over two dozen practice areas, as well as leading experts in the field of criminal justice and reform, the MSBA could provide expertise to this Task Force.

The MSBA requests an amendment for the MSBA to be added to the Task Force with at least two representatives, designated by the MSBA President. The MSBA would be glad to chair the Task Force. The MSBA also notes the inclusion of civil infractions in the bill, and asks whether the bill should be amended to remove that category.

For the reasons stated above, MSBA supports SB 209 and respectfully requests a favorable report with proposed amendment. For additional information, please feel free to contact Shaoli Katana at MSBA at shaoli@msba.org.