



MONTGOMERY COUNTY COUNCIL
ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND

WILL JAWANDO
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CHAIR, EDUCATION & CULTURE COMMITTEE
PLANNING, HOUSING, AND PARKS COMMITTEE

February 13, 2023

Montgomery County Councilmember Will Jawando
Testimony in Support of SB0285
County Police Accountability Boards – Investigation of Complaints of Police Misconduct
February 14, 2023

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

I am writing to share my support for SB0285, which would allow local governing bodies to authorize a police accountability board (PAB) to exercise investigatory and subpoena powers, and allow PABs to conduct an investigation of police misconduct concurrently with a law enforcement agency investigating the complaint. I would welcome this strengthening of police accountability boards as part of our ongoing efforts to make our community as safe as possible for all.

In the last few years, we have made significant strides in Montgomery County to improve law enforcement. For example, the County required independent investigations after officer-involved deaths, raised the standard of when deadly force can be used, and required additional training of our County police through Montgomery College on topics related to socially just policing, communication skills, and community engagement. These improvements strengthen our law enforcement and our community more generally.

Our county will continue its efforts to improve law enforcement as a part of a broader effort to improve public safety, and the state's partnership and support in those efforts will be important. SB0285 presents an opportunity for the state to provide counties, such as mine, additional tools to ensure greater transparency and accountability in law enforcement.

Later this year, the Montgomery County Police Department will be under the jurisdiction of our Police Accountability Board. The county's PAB began their work in July 2022 and continues to evaluate

policing trends and provide policy recommendations to improve police accountability. Allowing PABs to exercise investigatory and subpoena powers would itself be helpful, and healthy, as our community continues to grapple with how best to build a more just community, where all people can be and feel safe.

I appreciate your thoughtful deliberation of this legislation, and thank you for the opportunity to submit this written testimony. I urge a favorable report on SB0285 to advance justice and accountability in law enforcement.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Will Jawando", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Will Jawando