

Good afternoon. First off I would like to take this opportunity to thank members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee for allowing me to submit testimony, and speak on this matter.

By way of introduction, my name is Julius (Jay) Levine. As a young man, I was drafted into the US Army out of high school during the Vietnam war and retired after returning from Desert Storm.

After retirement I worked as a DOD Police officer in the Republic of Panama and then at Ft Detrick Maryland. I later applied to and was accepted at the Frederick City Police department where I served in the patrol division, the community services division, and finally the criminal investigations division until retirement in December of 2012.

I am currently the Chairperson of the Public Safety Committee of the Frederick County chapter of the NAACP.

Speaking as a representative of that organization and as a citizen of the State of Maryland; I request that you support the proposed legislature (SB 285) that gives the Police Accountability Board (PAB) the powers that are needed to make it effective. With the powers of investigation and subpoena regarding police misconduct, the PAB's go from being what has been referred to as an *advisory* board to an *accountability* board. They will not be hampered in their endeavors to seek the truth.

Police misconduct has been a part of society from the beginning and it takes many forms, from minimal violations of an individual's constitutional rights, to the unnecessary taking of an individual's life. I'm not naïve or blind, I know that there are dangers in the job of being a police officer and things could go south quickly. But as a police officer you are not there to make it go south, you are there to deescalate a situation if possible and enforce the laws. To do this you rely on your training and conditioning. Once you stray from that and you violate rules of conduct there should be a mechanism to hold you accountable.

I know that there are those who have and will come out against the PAB in general and would say things like, because of the nature of the profession, only the police should be allowed to investigate misconduct allegations against police, you will lose officers or you won't get candidates wanting to come into the profession. My responses are;

- i. Firstly, the police have been investigating police misconduct since the inception of the profession and for the most part it hasn't worked, because if it had there would not be a need for legislation of this type'
- ii. Secondly, If an individual doesn't want to be held accountable for his/her actions they should not be wearing the badge and gun.

I will close by saying this: THERE ARE A LOT OF GOOD POLICE OFFICERS OUT THERE, THE VAST MAJORITY OF THEM, BUT THEIR JOBS ARE MADE HARDER

AND MORE DANGEROUS BY THE ACTIONS OF THE FEW. With the PAB being given the tools they need to be able to conduct investigations free from interference, it sends the signal that those good officers won't have to be saddled with the conduct of the few.