



MARYLAND LEGISLATIVE LATINO CAUCUS

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TO: Delegate Luke Clippinger, Chair
Delegate David Moon, Vice Chair
Judiciary Committee Members
FROM: Maryland Legislative Latino Caucus
DATE: March 1, 2023
RE: HB0585 Public Safety – Use of Force Incident Reports

The MLLC supports HB0585 Public Safety – Use of Force Incident Reports, 2023

The MLLC is a bipartisan group of Senators and Delegates committed to supporting legislation that improves the lives of Latinos throughout our state. The MLLC is a crucial voice in the development of public policy that uplifts the Latino community and benefits the state of Maryland. Thank you for allowing us the opportunity to express our support of HB0585.

Recent years have shone a light on the prevalence of officers misusing force, often in the context of racial profiling. Much of this problem is fueled by the "blue wall of silence" or the tendency of officers to not speak out against their own. It is only now being addressed head on by grassroots movements like Black Lives Matter, which shows just how important it is that the general public take action against this kind of injustice, but it all starts with awareness. According to the ACLU, the majority of arrests after a use of force incident are for low-level charges, which would include baseless charges to justify the force, or where the supposed offense occurred as a result of the force officers used.¹ In the state of Maryland, African American, Caucasian and Hispanic suspects accounted for the most use of force incidents at 47%, 45% and 6%, respectively.² In Montgomery County alone, there was an 18% increase in use of force incidents that involved Hispanics from 2020 to 2021.³ Requiring use of force incident reports to be consistently updated in public manner will increase public awareness of officer misuse of force and racial profiling, as well as keep officers accountable to the public.

HB0585 will require reports regarding law enforcement/police officers involved use of force incidents to include the officer's justification for the use of force. It will also require local law enforcement agencies to update their websites every 3 months with information regarding use of force incidents. This legislation will ensure that the State can understand why officers use force, and hold them accountable if necessary. The legislation will thus reduce the use of force incidents amongst police, which disproportionately impacts Latinx and people of color.

For these reasons, the Maryland Legislative Latino Caucus respectfully requests a favorable report on HB0585.

¹ [Spielberger, J. \(2021\). *Chasing Justice: Addressing Police Violence and Corruption in Maryland*. American Civil Liberties Union \(ACLU\) of Maryland.](#)

² [Pickett, D. C. \(Ed.\). \(2022\). *A Review of Use of Force Incidents, January-December 2021*. Maryland State Police.](#)

³ [Montgomery County Department of Police Annual Use of Force Report 2021. \(n.d.\). Montgomery County Department of Police.](#)