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Judiciary Committee



The Maryland House of Delegates
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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Judiciary Committee

Tuesday, March 7, 2023

House Bill 1044 Criminal Procedure – Crime Solvers Reward Fund – Establishment

Good afternoon esteemed,

I am here today to urge you to support House Bill 1044 Criminal Procedure – Crime Solvers Reward Fund – Establishment, the proposal seeks to raise the current crime solvers reward fund in Baltimore city from \$8,000 to \$50,000. As a concerned member of society who places high value on equity and security in our neighborhoods, I strongly believe that this bill constitutes a crucial advancement in grappling with the grave challenge of homicide in Baltimore.

Allow me to paint this picture, suppose you live in a community where a murder has taken place, and you possess crucial information that could help law enforcement bring the perpetrator to justice. However, you may be hesitant to come forward due to valid concerns such as the fear of retribution, being labeled as an informant, or even putting yourself and your loved ones in danger. The proposed increase in the reward fund would provide a much-needed incentive for you or individuals to overcome these concerns and come forward with vital information that could help solve homicide cases. It would not only afford you the peace of mind of starting a new life, but it would also foster a safer and more equitable society where you or other individuals are motivated to act honorably and aid law enforcement in bringing perpetrators of homicide to justice.

Furthermore, the proposed increase would create a culture in which individuals are not deterred from providing information to the police. By providing a significant financial incentive, this bill addresses the very real concerns of safety, retribution, and stigma that can prevent people from sharing vital information with law enforcement. It also promotes a culture of cooperation and trust between the community and law enforcement, leading to safer and more equitable societies.

Additionally, a review of the 990s for Metro Crime Stoppers yields that in 20 years less than \$130,000 in the entire central Maryland region. Last year, less than \$3,000 was awarded. Clearly, the low rewards are not having the kind of impact we need.

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In conclusion, the proposed increase in the crime solvers reward fund is not only a practical solution to a serious problem but also a powerful symbol of our shared commitment to justice and safety for all. I strongly urge a favorable report on HB 1044. Thank you for your attention to this critical matter.

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