



February 17, 2023

**The Eastern Region of Jack and Jill of America, Inc. supports SB404/HB0518 – The Police Accountability Boards and Administrative Charging Committees Bill**

**Chair Clippinger and members of the Committee:**

As mothers, we are deeply concerned about the issue of police accountability and the need for reforms to ensure transparency, fairness and justice in our law enforcement agencies. The lack of accountability has a lasting impact on our families and communities, specifically as mothers of Black children.

As a group of mothers who have coalesced around ensuring positive social, cultural and educational opportunities, it is our responsibility to demand change to ensure that future generations grow up in a country, where they feel safe and protected by those sworn to protect the public. Recent incidents of police brutality and the excessive use of force have left many of us scared and angry. We worry about the safety of our children, many of whom are disproportionately subject to harm by police violence. Today we urge this committee to support the establishment of a police accountability board in each county within the state of Maryland. This will give county authorities the ability to further investigate and act as an administrative charging committee to review policies, as well as other abuses by those associated with law enforcement. We believe that such a board is essential to restore trust in our law enforcement.

As a group of mothers, we believe that it is our duty to raise children who respect those who enforce rules fairly. In order for this social contract to work, it means that law enforcement agencies must also be trustworthy in their approach. Police accountability boards in each county would ensure a level of transparency in regards to policies and administrative charging.



We support the establishment of county police accountability boards with the following key features:

- 1) Independent body with the power to make recommendations to change policies;
  
- 2) Collaboration with community organizations and others in the county to ensure that the board is responsive to the needs of the local citizens;
  
- 3) A diverse representative membership with civilian members from different communities and backgrounds that do not include law enforcement; and
  
- 4) Adequate funding to ensure the board is fully operational and resources needed to investigate.

In conclusion, as mothers of the Maryland Chapters of the Eastern Region of Jack and Jill of America, Inc., we strongly believe that the establishment of county level police accountability boards are critical to ensuring that our children grow up in the world that it safe, just and equitable. We urge this committee, and then the assembly, to take actions to restore trust and accountability. Thank you for your attention to this issue.

Respectively,

***We submit this on behalf of the Legislative Affairs Chairs of the Eleven Maryland Chapters of Jack and Jill of America, Inc.***