



TESTIMONY FOR SB0621
County Police Accountability Boards
Investigation of Complaints of Police Misconduct

Bill Sponsors: Senator Carter

Committee: Judicial Proceedings

Organization Submitting: Maryland Legislative Coalition

Person Submitting: Aileen Alex, co-chair

Position: **FAVORABLE**

I am submitting this testimony in favor of SB0621 on behalf of the Maryland Legislative Coalition. The Maryland Legislative Coalition is an association of activists - individuals and grassroots groups in every district in the state. We are unpaid citizen lobbyists, and our Coalition supports well over 30,000 members.

Police accountability boards play a crucial role in ensuring transparency, fairness, and accountability within law enforcement agencies. However, under current legislation, PABs lack independent investigatory and subpoena powers. Maryland PABs are reliant on internal investigations conducted by the very police departments that need to be held accountable. Thus, distrust of the police force is not fully addressed.

With the powers of investigation and subpoena regarding police misconduct, our PAB's go from being what has been referred to as an advisory board to an accountability board. This bill provides PABs with the tools they need to be able to conduct investigations free from interference. It also has the potential of freeing good officers from being maligned by the conduct of a few.

MLC strongly supports a bill that authorizes PABs to exercise investigatory and subpoena powers, concurrently with a law enforcement agency investigating the complaint.

We support this bill and recommend a **FAVORABLE** report in committee.