

**SB256\_DPSCS\_SUPPORT.pdf**

Uploaded by: Catherine Kahl

Position: FAV



**Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services  
Office of the Secretary**

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**BILL: SENATE BILL 256**

**POSITION: SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENT**

**EXPLANATION:** SB 256 alters the language under the Public Safety Article for the purpose of clarifying the responsibilities and processes of the Maryland Police Training and Standards Commission (Commission).

**COMMENTS:**

- The Commission is an independent Commission housed within the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services that establishes the training and selection standards for all certified police officers in the State. Additionally, it approves the training requirements for police academies, in-service training, and security officer training. The Commission regularly certifies approximately 16,000 officers each year and conducts audits of law enforcement agencies to ensure compliance with applicable standards.
- SB 251 clarifies the following:
  - The Commission's authority to mandate specific topics for in-service each year, which ensures training is provided consistently throughout the State of Maryland.
  - Streamlines and improves the Commission's ability to audit mandated topics of study by authorizing the development of specific completion requirements.
  - Modifies language, originally directing the Commission to develop a variety of processes and procedures to directing a periodic review and update of regulations, curriculum, and model policies required.
  - Requires a mental health evaluation as opposed to a mental health screening, while requiring a mental health screening every two years to maintain certification.

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- Removes language referencing the Law Enforcement Officers Bill of Rights as it relates to Commission decertification hearings.
- Requires the Commission to conduct a full job task analysis every ten years to ensure entry level training is modern and relevant.
- The Commission supports the amendment proposed by the Chief's and Sheriff's Association to remove language establishing the Secretary of the State Police as the permanent chair of the Commission and agrees with:

**striking on page 5, line 11 beginning with "THE" through "(B)" in line 12; and removing both brackets in line 12.**

**CONCLUSION:** For these reasons, the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services respectfully requests the Committee vote **FAVORABLY WITH AMENDMENT** on Senate Bill 256.

**SB 256\_MNADV\_FWA.pdf**

Uploaded by: Melanie Shapiro

Position: FWA



**BILL NO:** Senate Bill 256  
**TITLE:** Public Safety - Maryland Police Training and Standards Commission – Revisions  
**COMMITTEE:** Judicial Proceedings  
**HEARING DATE:** February 6, 2024  
**POSITION:** **SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENTS**

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The Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence (MNADV) is the state domestic violence coalition that brings together victim service providers, allied professionals, and concerned individuals for the common purpose of reducing intimate partner and family violence and its harmful effects on our citizens. **MNADV urges the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee to issue a favorable report with amendments on SB 256.**

Senate Bill 256 requires entrance level training and additional trainings every three years on laws and services for victims of rape and sexual offenses, human trafficking, and generally contact and treatment of victims and services available to them. The bill also includes training conducted on use of force, de-escalation and the recognition and prevention of discrimination. MNADV supports these training efforts.

In a 2015 survey, 88% of victims of domestic violence or sexual assault reported that police “sometimes” or “often” do not believe victims or blamed victims for the violence.<sup>1</sup> In that same survey, 83% of the those surveyed thought police “sometimes” or “often” do not take allegations of sexual assault and domestic violence seriously.<sup>2</sup> Over 80% believed that police-community relations with marginalized communities influenced survivors’ willingness to call the police.<sup>3</sup>

MNADV would request that the bill be amended to include the following language on page 9 after line 5, “THE CRIMINAL LAWS CONCERNING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, INCLUDING SERVICES AND SUPPORT AVAILABLE TO VICTIMS AND THE RIGHTS OF AND APPROPRIATE TREATMENT OF VICTIMS.”

For the above stated reasons, the **Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence urges a favorable report with amendments on SB 256.**

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<sup>1</sup> ACLU, [Responses from the Field: Sexual Assault, Domestic Violence, and Policing](#), 2015.

<sup>2</sup> *Id.*

<sup>3</sup> *Id.*



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**SB256.Council and TheArc.LOI.pdf**

Uploaded by: Rachel London

Position: INFO



**Maryland Developmental  
Disabilities Council**  
CREATING CHANGE · IMPROVING LIVES



**Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee**

**SB 256: Public Safety – Maryland Police Training and Standards Commission – Revisions**

**February 6, 2024**

**Position: Letter of Information**

The Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council and The Arc Maryland are statewide advocacy organizations committed to improving the opportunities and outcomes for Marylanders with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD).

**WHAT** does this legislation do?

- Removes, from statute, the entrance-level police training and every 3-year in-service training requirement about interacting with people with disabilities.
- It also removes other training requirements, but adds them back in another section of the statute. **The training requirement about interacting with people with disabilities is NOT ADDED back in another section.**

**WHY** is this problematic?

- After Ethan Saylor, a man with Down syndrome, died after an altercation with police in a movie theater, the General Assembly created the Ethan Saylor Alliance (Alliance). The legislation focused on the need for increased training for members of law enforcement and other public service employees on the specific, and somewhat specialized needs of people with developmental and intellectual disabilities. The purpose of the Alliance is to provide increased training for members of law enforcement and other public service entities on specific needs of those with developmental and intellectual disabilities.
- The Police Training and Standards Commission **required training about interacting with people with intellectual and developmental disabilities for all entry-level (academy) law enforcement training programs starting in 2015.**
- Recognizing the importance of training about people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, **in 2016, the Commission mandated that all police officers receiving the training during in-service training.**
- Beginning **in 2019, the Commission mandated that the training be included in the three year cycle of mandated in-service training topics.**

In order to continue to promote appropriate and effective interaction between law enforcement and people with disabilities, entrance-level police training AND in-service training must continue as it has since 2015 and 2016, respectively. **Therefore, we strongly recommend the following lines NOT be removed: On page 8, lines 4-9 and lines 16-17.**

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**SB 256 PFA Testimony.pdf**

Uploaded by: Rebecca Rienzi

Position: INFO



### **Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee**

SB 256: Public Safety – Maryland Police Training and Standards Commission – Revisions

February 6, 2024

### **Positions: Letter of Information**

Pathfinders for Autism (PFA) is dedicated to helping individuals, family members, caregivers, and professionals find resources, supports, and training while working to increase intellectual and developmental disability (IDD) awareness and to advocate for the needs of individuals with IDD and their families. In our 24-year history, we have created an education program focused on offering parents and professionals opportunities to learn from experts, and we have developed a robust training program which includes first responders, hospitals, schools, and other industries.

PFA has been teaching the IDD class for law enforcement agencies across Maryland since 2012. To date, we have trained over 17,000 officers in over 800 classes using the curriculum we developed which is certified by the Maryland Police and Correctional Training Commissions (MPCTC).

Senate Bill 256 removes, from statute, the entrance-level police trainings, and every 3-year in-service training requirement about understanding IDD, along with several other topics. Most of the omitted topics are added back in another section of the statute, however the training requirement about interacting with people with IDD is excluded.

This is problematic because the General Assembly created the Ethan Saylor Alliance, which focuses on the need for increased training for law enforcement, and other public service sectors, on the specialized needs of people with IDD. The Police Training and Standards Commission required training about interacting with people with IDD for all entry-level (academy) law enforcement training beginning in 2015. Recognizing the importance of this training, the Commission mandated that all active-duty police officers receive training during in-service. Beginning in 2019, the Commission mandated that the training be included in the three-year cycle of mandated in-service.

Entry level and in-service police training must continue to promote appropriate and effective interactions between law enforcement and people with IDD. We strongly recommend that lines 4-9 and lines 16-17 on page 8 **NOT BE REMOVED**.

**Contact: Rebecca Rienzi, Executive Director, Pathfinders for Autism, [rrienzi@pathfindersforautism.org](mailto:rrienzi@pathfindersforautism.org)**