



**MONTGOMERY COUNTY COUNCIL**  
ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND

DAWN LUEDTKE  
COUNCILMEMBER  
DISTRICT 7

February 8, 2024

The Honorable Senator William C. Smith, Jr.  
Chair, Judicial Proceedings Committee  
2 East  
Miller Senate Office Building  
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: Senate Bill 470 – *Growing Apprenticeships and the Public Safety Workforce (GAPS)*

Dear Chair Smith,

I write in support of Senate Bill 470 - Growing Apprenticeships and the Public Safety Workforce (GAPS) Act. While a great deal of attention has been given to the shortages of certified law enforcement officers throughout the State of Maryland, our corrections officers, fire/EMS providers, and public safety answering point (PSAP) operators are all experiencing a depleted workforce with an insufficient pipeline of new employees. The expanded definition of the scope of the apprenticeship to cover all public safety agencies, law enforcement, and corrections, will assist greatly with the development of our next generation of public safety professionals across the full ecosystem.

To the extent that our PSAP operators are included within the intended meaning of "other emergency services" as set forth in Md. Code, Public Safety Art. §1-301(t), no amendments are needed. To the extent that an amendment is required in order to include PSAP operators within the scope of the apprenticeship program, I urge the Committee's consideration of expanding the definition of "public safety agency" set forth in proposed Md. Code, Labor & Empl. Art. §11-603(a)(4) to include apprenticeships within the PSAPs.

I also want to commend the addition of the language set forth as proposed §3-207(m) to the Public Safety Article. The emphasis on establishing a positive culture of mental health and wellness for all law enforcement professionals, including peer support, stress management, and efficacy

measures will be beneficial to growing and retaining these professionals moving forward. Although this provision applies to the Police Standards Training Commission and to law enforcement officers without reference to fire/EMS and PSAP employees, this is an important step. I encourage Maryland's fire/EMS agencies and PSAPs to learn from this moving forward and expand resources and programming to assist their employees as well.

I urge the Committee's favorable report. If you should have any questions regarding my written testimony, or if I may be of any assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dawn Luedtke". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "D" and "L".

Dawn Luedtke  
Councilmember, District 7  
Montgomery County

cc: Members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee