



THE SENATE OF MARYLAND  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

**Testimony of Senator Jill P. Carter**  
**In Favor of SB0624 – Task Force to Study Public Information Act**  
**Requests Made to Law Enforcement - Establishment**  
**Before the Judicial Proceedings Committee**  
**On February 16<sup>th</sup> 2024**

**Mr. Chairman, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee:**

**Senate Bill 0624 establishes a task force featuring members of the Maryland State Legislature, the State Police, the public defender's office as well as leaders from various community organizations, for the purpose of investigating the costs charged to law enforcement agencies as well as the procedures applied by law enforcement agencies under the disclosure of records requested under the Maryland Public Information Act (PIA).**

**To begin, SB0178, Anton's Law, was enacted in 2021 with the intent of making our law enforcement agencies more transparent and accountable. The intent of this task force is to oversee the implementation of this law and to ensure its effective enforcement. Despite the passage of time since the enactment of Anton's Law and the subsequent enactment of SB777 (passed the house and senate and signed by the Governor in 2022) this task force has yet to actually meet.**

**Transparency and accountability are crucial in maintaining public trust, especially in matters related to law enforcement in today's era of fraught tensions with policing. If we want to maintain public trust in our government, let alone policing, it is crucial that Anton's Law, a bill passed with much fervor in a time of immense social strife, actually be enforced. This general assembly cannot be accused of simply paying lip service to the issue of police accountability in our communities.**

**For this statute to be effective, it is imperative that this task force convenes, to ensure that our law enforcement agencies are transparent and held accountable. I have submitted an amendment that would include the Attorney General as a member of the task force, at his request, and trust that the ear marked dollars associated with the law are granted to his office to ensure the task force's success.**

**I urge this committee to give a favorable report with amendment on SB0624. Thank you for your time.**

**Respectfully,**

**Jill P. Carter**