

# **Maryland Workforce Association -SB470 Support.pdf**

Uploaded by: Brandon Butler

Position: FAV

# MARYLAND WORKFORCE ASSOCIATION

Kirkland Murray, *President*  
Brandon Butler, *Executive Director*  
[www.marylandworkforceassociation.org](http://www.marylandworkforceassociation.org)

## **MWA Members**

**Anne Arundel County**  
Anne Arundel Workforce  
Development Corporation  
Kirkland Murray, *Executive Director*

**Baltimore City**  
Mayor's Office of Employment  
Development  
MacKenzie Garvin, *Director*

**Baltimore County**  
Baltimore County Department of  
Economic and Workforce  
Development  
Neishall Schyler, *WIOA Ops.  
Manager*

**Carroll County**  
Carroll County Workforce  
Development  
Heather Lee Powell, *Manager*

**Frederick County**  
Frederick County Workforce  
Services  
Michelle Day, *Director*

**Howard County**  
Howard County Office of Workforce  
Development  
Francine Trout, *Director*

**Lower Shore**  
Lower Shore Workforce Alliance  
(Somerset, Wicomico, & Worcester,  
Counties)  
Leslie Porter-Cabell, *Workforce  
Director*

**Montgomery County** WorkSource  
Montgomery, Inc. Anthony  
Featherstone, *Executive Director*

**Prince George's County**  
Prince George's County Workforce  
Development Board Walter  
Simmons, *Executive Director*

**Southern Maryland**  
Southern Maryland Job Source  
(Calvert, Charles, & St. Mary's  
Counties)  
Ruthy Davis, *Director*

**Susquehanna Region**  
Susquehanna Workforce Network,  
Inc. (Cecil & Harford Counties)  
Kimberly Justus, *Executive Director*

**Upper Shore**  
Upper Shore Workforce Investment  
Board (Caroline, Dorchester, Kent,  
Queen Anne's, & Talbot Counties)  
Dan Schneckeburger, *Executive  
Director*

**Western Maryland**  
Western Maryland Consortium  
(Allegany, Garrett &  
Washington Counties)  
Deborah Gilbert, *Executive Director*

February 5, 2023

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


Dear Chair Smith and Members of the Committee:

The Maryland Workforce Association, an association of the thirteen Local Workforce Development Boards in Maryland, would like to express its SUPPORT of Senate Bill 470: Growing Apprenticeships and the Public Safety Workforce (GAPS) Act.

Maryland has a lofty goal to grow Registered Apprenticeship opportunities by 2030. Maryland's local workforce boards are here to assist by providing connections with Maryland's employers and jobseekers. Many of our local areas have invested funds into growing Registered Apprenticeship opportunities and look forward to working with the Maryland Department of Labor and other stakeholders in growing apprenticeship opportunities for students and individuals alike. Senate Bill 470 seeks to meet a great workforce need in creating a pipeline of individuals to enter public safety careers.

Thank you in advance for your time and consideration of this measure. We, again, respectfully request a favorable report of this bill. If you have any questions about the Association's support of this measure, please contact Brandon Butler, Maryland Workforce Association's Executive Director at [mwaexecdirector@gmail.com](mailto:mwaexecdirector@gmail.com).

Sincerely,

  
Kirkland Murray, *President*  
Maryland Workforce Association

**SB470\_DPSCS\_SUPPORT.pdf**

Uploaded by: Carolyn Scruggs

Position: FAV



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

6776 Reisterstown Road, Baltimore, Maryland 21215  
410-585-3346 – TOLL FREE 877-379-8636 • [www.dpscs.maryland.gov](http://www.dpscs.maryland.gov)

**BILL: SENATE BILL 470**

**POSITION: SUPPORT**

STATE OF MARYLAND

WES MOORE  
GOVERNOR

ARUNA MILLER  
LT. GOVERNOR

CAROLYN J. SCRUGGS  
SECRETARY

ANTHONY A. GASKINS  
CHIEF OF STAFF

JOSEPH SEDTAL  
DEPUTY SECRETARY  
ADMINISTRATION

ANNIE D. HARVEY  
DEPUTY SECRETARY  
OPERATIONS

ANGELINA GUARINO  
ASSISTANT SECRETARY  
DATA, POLICY AND GRANTS

RENARD E. BROOKS  
ASSISTANT SECRETARY  
PROGRAMS, TREATMENT &  
RE-ENTRY SERVICES

**EXPLANATION:** Senate Bill 470 establishes a Public Safety Apprenticeship Program within the Department of Labor for the purpose of providing career opportunities for young individuals within public safety agencies. The bill also requires the Maryland Police Training and Standards Commission to develop mental health wellness policies that will promote safety and wellness at the entry level law enforcement agency.

**COMMENTS:**

- SB 470 provides Public Safety agencies such as DPSCS the opportunity to create positive relationships between young people, the community and corrections agencies.
- Creating environments where people feel supported and valued is imperative in retaining our public safety workforce.
- The Department is committed to addressing the challenge of staffing shortages in our correctional facilities.
- DPSCS has made significant strides in reducing its overall vacancy rate, thanks to an improvement in recruitment strategies. SB 470 would only provide a boost to these efforts.
- The bill allows agencies to establish apprenticeships with the ability to offset the additional cost burden these programs can have on agencies.
- Programs such as those created by SB 470 show that the Governor indeed believes that no matter where you start in life, you deserve an equal opportunity to succeed.

**CONCLUSION:** For these reasons, the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services respectfully asks this Committee to vote **FAVORABLY** on Senate Bill 470.

# **CE Ball 2024 - SB 470 Growing Apprenticeships and**

Uploaded by: County Executive Calvin Ball

Position: FAV



## HOWARD COUNTY OFFICE OF COUNTY EXECUTIVE

3430 Courthouse Drive ■ Ellicott City, Maryland 21043 ■ 410-313-2013 Voice/Relay

Calvin Ball  
Howard County Executive  
cball@howardcountymd.gov

www.howardcountymd.gov  
FAX 410-313-3051

February 9, 2024

Senator William Smith, Chair  
Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee  
Miller Senate Office, 2 East  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Re: **TESTIMONY OF SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENTS: SB 470: Growing Apprenticeships and Public Safety Workforce (GAPS) Act**

Dear Chair Smith, Vice Chair Waldstreicher, and Members of the Committee,

I commend Governor Moore for investing in Maryland's dedicated public safety workforce, strengthening existing pathways for apprenticeships, and establishing a law enforcement officer wellness program. I encourage you to consider including the friendly amendment proposed by the Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) to include corrections officials in the membership and mission of the proposed effort.

Howard County is home to the safest city in Maryland and one of the safest in America. We received this designation, in large part, due to our continuous efforts to invest in those who give selflessly to their community. In 2023, we added 24 new patrol positions to the Howard County Police Department, the largest increase in sworn personnel in over a decade. Just a few short weeks ago, we graduated 28 recruits, which is our largest academy class in three decades, who will be joining our force. In addition, we are excited to welcome the 22 new recruits who will enter the Howard County Police Academy next week. Just last month, our Department of Corrections earned prestigious national accreditation from the American Correctional Association, making us only the second local jurisdiction in Maryland to earn the industry's highest accreditation. Yet, we know that ongoing recruitment for these positions is a key aspect in ensuring a diverse and high-quality force.

In Howard County, we know that we must do our part to ensure the workforce and employment needs of our residents are being met. As one of the first local jurisdictions in the State to reactivate county government apprenticeships, we are committed to providing residents of all ages the resources they need to promote economic mobility. Each year, we host 20 programs with a combined enrollment of nearly 1,400 apprentices who are eagerly learning how to be the next generation of public servants. Senate Bill 470 will help create a pipeline of talented residents who will serve our community and help keep us safe. I welcome your support and respectfully request a favorable with amendments report on Senate Bill 470.

All the Best,

Calvin Ball  
Howard County Executive

# **SB470 - Growing Apprenticeships in Public Safety**

Uploaded by: Dawn Luedtke

Position: FAV





**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

# **SB 470 - GBC.pdf**

Uploaded by: Jeffrey Zuback

Position: FAV



# POSITION STATEMENT

## Testimony to the Judicial Proceedings Committee

**Senate Bill 0470 – Growing Apprenticeships and the Public Safety Workforce (GAPS) Act**

**Sponsors: Senate President Bill Ferguson**

**February 9, 2024**

**JEFFREY ZUBACK**

**PUBLIC SAFETY DATA OFFICER**

**GREATER BALTIMORE COMMITTEE**

### **Position: Support**

The Greater Baltimore Committee (GBC) supports Senate Bill SB0470, which creates the Public Safety Apprenticeship Program, requires the Maryland Police Training and Standards Commission to develop model mental health and wellness policies for law enforcement agencies, and establishes the Workgroup on Growing Engagement in the Law Enforcement Workforce.

There is a national crisis when it comes to recruiting and retaining qualified police officers. Fewer people want to be police officers, more police officers are becoming eligible for retirement than ever before, and those becoming police officers are not staying long-term. This is increasingly evident with the Baltimore Police Department, which has experienced a net loss of one hundred officers each year over the past 4 years and is currently 550 officers short of budgeted numbers.

National research on police recruitment and retention collected by agencies such as the Police Executive Research Forum and the Department of Justice support police apprenticeship programs and mental health/wellness programs as effective strategies to both recruit and retain police officers. Furthermore, the creation of this workgroup is in alignment with one of the GBC's core public safety focus areas. As part of its multi-year agenda the GBC is utilizing the diverse human resources and talent acquisition leadership of its partners to help develop recruitment and retention strategies for the Baltimore Police Department. For these reasons, the GBC supports not just the passing of the bill but will also be an active partner in supporting the work of the Workgroup. Thank you.

*The Greater Baltimore Committee (GBC) is the leading voice for the private sector in the Baltimore region, providing insightful economic and civic leadership to drive collective impact. Composed of more than 400 organizations, including large, mid-size, and small companies, nonprofits, foundations, and educational and healthcare institutions, the GBC is dedicated to fostering the prosperity of the Greater Baltimore region.*

**GREATER BALTIMORE COMMITTEE**

111 South Calvert Street • Suite 1700 • Baltimore, Maryland • 21202-6180

(410) 727-2820 • [www.gbc.org](http://www.gbc.org)

**SB470Support.pdf**

Uploaded by: Kyle McColgan

Position: FAV



GREATER WASHINGTON  
Board of Trade

SB470– Growing Apprenticeships in Public Safety Act  
Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee  
Position: **FAVORABLE**  
Greater Washington Board of Trade  
February 8th, 2024

Dear Chairman Smith and Committee Members,

The Greater Washington Board of Trade is a pro-business and non-partisan organization supporting all industry sectors in the District of Columbia, suburban Maryland, and Northern Virginia, having done so for the last 134 years. We support SB470.

This legislation addresses some of the key issues with hiring and retention of law enforcement professionals by expanding the apprenticeship program, making the apprenticeship model a much more viable path toward joining the police force, and establishing much needed officer wellness programs which make available to officers.

Public safety professionals undergo extreme stress with, at present, very little mental wellness support, with outcomes that, while not surprising, are deeply concerning. In a recent survey by the National Alliance on Mental Illness, officers reported much higher rates of depression, burnout, PTSD, and anxiety than the general population. Almost 25% of officers reported having experienced suicidal ideations and suicide, in fact, does claim more lives of police officers than are lost in the line of duty.

Mental healthcare, even when available through more traditional pathways, is often foregone. According to an anonymous survey of 400 officers, many are not able to recognize the signs of mental health issues, many have concerns regarding confidentiality, many believe that mental health professionals cannot relate to those working in law enforcement, and many believe that seeking mental health services are unfit to serve as officers in the criminal justice system.

The implementation of peer support programs, incorporation of stress management techniques into training, and offering of psychological programming to help officers recognize the signs of mental health concerns and to help them manage stress, especially when approached from a responsibly data centered angle, will go a long way toward ameliorating these major problems, saving the lives of many officers, and allowing them to serve the community for much longer.

Further, the broadening of the range of career options within the public safety professions available to apprentices will provide much needed staffing relief for the entire force and may serve not only to better relations between communities and the public safety professionals that serve them but, over the long term, may serve to make public safety cohorts more closely resemble their communities.

As crime and public safety continue to become more of a regional concern, the Greater Washington Board of Trade and broader regional business community strongly support measures to improve the public safety community. Please support SB470.

# **GAPS Act of 2024 - Favorable.docx (1).pdf**

Uploaded by: Myles Hicks

Position: FAV



**STATE OF MARYLAND  
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR**



**WES MOORE,  
GOVERNOR**

STATE HOUSE  
100 STATE CIRCLE  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401-1925  
(410) 974-3901  
(TOLL FREE) 1-800-811-8336

TTY USERS CALL VIA MD RELAY

Dear Chairman Smith, Vice-chair Waldstreicher, and members of the committee,

On behalf of Governor Wes Moore, I urge a favorable report of HB597/SB470, Growing Apprenticeships and the Public Safety Workforce (GAPS) Act. Ensuring the safety of our communities heavily relies on a robust public safety workforce. However, the increasing number of unfilled positions in these crucial roles across the state is concerning. Without immediate action, we could face thousands of vacancies in law enforcement and other related public safety positions in the coming years.

The Growing Apprenticeships and Public Safety Workforce Act (GAPS Act) is intended to address workforce shortages for law enforcement officers, firefighters, emergency medical technicians, and related professions. The GAPS Act has three sections that proposes both short and long term actions to help address the workforce shortage problem. The first portion reforms the Law Enforcement Cadet Registered Apprenticeship Program by broadening the scope to focus on incentivizing registered Apprenticeship creation, rather than just the “cadet law enforcement” occupation. The second section creates a workgroup on growing engagement in the law enforcement workforce. The final section directs the Maryland Police Training and Standards Commission to develop a model policy for law enforcement officer wellness programs that can be adopted across the state.

Maryland needs to train and support highly-qualified public safety and law enforcement professionals to protect our communities. As we contend with workforce shortages across our public safety agencies, the GAPS Act will help us get more boots on the ground, and help us keep the boots we already have. Public safety is our administration’s top priority, and Governor Moore is working to ensure that our communities are safer by directly providing support that will help Maryland expand its law enforcement community.

Sincerely,  
Myles Hicks, Deputy Legislative Officer  
Office of Governor Wes Moore

**MCPA-MSA\_SB 470 - Gap Act\_Support copy.pdf**

Uploaded by: Natasha Mehu

Position: FAV



# Maryland Chiefs of Police Association

## Maryland Sheriffs' Association



### MEMORANDUM

TO: The Honorable William Smith, Jr., Chair and  
Members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee

FROM: Darren Popkin, Executive Director, MCPA-MSA Joint Legislative Committee  
Andrea Mansfield, Representative, MCPA-MSA Joint Legislative Committee  
Natasha Mehu, Representative, MCPA-MSA Joint Legislative Committee

DATE: February 9, 2024

RE: **SB 470 Growing Apprenticeships and the Public Safety Workforce (GAPS) Act**

POSITION: **SUPPORT**

The Maryland Chiefs of Police Association (MCPA) and the Maryland Sheriffs' Association (MSA) **SUPPORT SB 470**. This bill transforms the Law Enforcement Cadet Apprenticeship Program into the Public Safety Apprenticeship Program.

In recent years, law enforcement agencies across the state have struggled to recruit and retain officers. This growing problem stymies public safety efforts, forces agencies to do much more with much less manpower, leaves communities vulnerable, and leads officers on the force to burn out. This issue is not limited to law enforcement. Public safety agencies are using all the tools in their toolbox to incentivize people to join the force. Existing tools such as the Law Enforcement Cadet Apprenticeship Program help but need to be improved to address the challenges and needs of the times.

The overall goal of SB 470 is to make sure that the state has a robust, highly trained, and qualified public safety workforce. It reforms the existing apprenticeship program by broadening the definition of included public safety agencies, expanding the ability for agencies to qualify for grants under the program, and increasing the amount of money an agency may receive for eligible apprentices that participate in the program. To improve officer retention, additional provisions require the establishment of a model mental health wellness policy for law enforcement agencies to ensure that officers are supported through their often difficult work. The work only begins with this bill as it also creates a Workgroup on Growing Engagement in the Law Enforcement Workforce that is charged with studying the shortage of employees, determining ways to advertise and promote law enforcement jobs, and making recommendations on incentives.

SB 470 provides public safety agencies with resources and support to bolster recruitment and retention. For these reasons, MCPA and MSA **SUPPORT SB 470**.

**SB 470\_MDL\_Letter of Support.docx.pdf**

Uploaded by: Portia Wu

Position: FAV

**Senate Bill 470**

Date: February 9, 2024  
Committee: Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee  
Bill Title: Growing Apprenticeships and the Public Safety Workforce (GAPS) Act  
Re: Letter of Support

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**The Maryland Department of Labor (MDL) strongly supports the GAPS Act, which will make our State safer and connect Marylanders to good-paying careers. This critical legislation will expand Registered Apprenticeship programs to grow our public safety workforce.**

The bill amends §11–603 of the Labor and Employment Article to create the Public Safety Apprenticeship Program, which supports the creation and expansion of Registered Apprenticeship opportunities in public safety careers throughout Maryland. The legislation also requires the Maryland Police Training and Standards Commission to develop mental health wellness policies for law enforcement agencies across the State. Lastly, HB 597 establishes the *Growing Engagement in the Law Enforcement Workforce Working Group*.

**As the State Apprenticeship Agency, MDL’s Division of Workforce Development and Adult Learning (DWDAL) supports HB 597 and the creation and expansion of Registered Apprenticeship pathways for public safety careers.**

The Department has been working to grow Registered Apprenticeship in the public safety sector for years, and the GAPS Act will allow us to expand those efforts. In 2019, the Maryland General Assembly passed the “Community Safety and Strengthening Act,” which established the Law Enforcement Cadet Registered Apprenticeship Program. The Program provided grant funding to develop Law Enforcement Cadet Registered Apprenticeship pathways and hire apprentices. While well intentioned, the Program has not met the goals of the initial legislation. Despite ongoing outreach and technical assistance, MDL has received zero grant applications to date. The GAPS Act proposes the following modifications to enhance the initiative and attract more applicants:

1. Expand covered occupations from only police cadets to any public safety occupation;
2. Remove income/residency eligibility requirements for participants; and,
3. Increase the grant ceiling for each apprentice to \$5000.

These modifications will support the growing demand for skilled public safety professionals and make Maryland safer. In 2023, MDL released the [Public Safety Apprenticeships Interim report](#), which found that State law enforcement and correctional agencies were experiencing persistent



LEGISLATIVE OFFICE  
45 Calvert Street  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
443-401-5129

frontline vacancy rates as high as 14%. The Department projects an average of 10,453 vacancies every year through 2030 due to growth in the industry and people leaving the labor force (e.g. retiring) or switching careers.

Registered Apprenticeship is one of the strongest tools we have to prevent these future vacancies and ensure our public safety workforce reflects our communities and remains whole for decades to come. A review of the Baltimore County Police Department conducted by MDL, for instance, found that officers who entered as Registered Apprentices remained with the Department for an average of 16.9 years. Additionally, the Commission to Advance and Strengthen Firefighting and Emergency Medical Services Within Maryland identified Registered Apprenticeship as one of its [report](#) recommendations for filling workforce vacancies for firefighters and emergency medical services. These jobs lead to self-sustaining, high-paying careers that allow Marylanders of all backgrounds to have secure, stable futures.

Registered Apprenticeship is growing in Maryland, from 7,340 apprentices in October 2016 to 11,465 in January 2024. The GAPS Act will expand this growth into the public safety sector making Maryland a safer place to live and work.

**The Department respectfully requests a favorable report from the Committee and is prepared to respond to questions.**

**Anne Arundel County \_FAV\_SB 470.pdf**

Uploaded by: Steuart Pittman

Position: FAV



February 9, 2024

**Senate Bill 470**

**Growing Apprenticeships and the Public Safety Workforce (GAPS) Act**

**Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee**

**Position: FAVORABLE**

Anne Arundel County **SUPPORTS** Senate Bill 470 Growing Apprenticeships and the Public Safety Workforce (GAPS) Act. This Bill improves the existing Law Enforcement Cadet Apprenticeship Program by significantly expanding the purpose and scope of the program to address recruitment challenges faced across the public safety departments.

I believe our police department is among the best in the country, and I am proud of the quality of our officers and their service. However, despite having an incredible academy training program, exceptional benefits package, and one of the highest starting salaries in the state, we are still incredibly lean. Our county has 808 positions authorized, but our number stands at 766 today, a significant drop from the 806 high in 2020.

We already have the best academy, technology, and compensation in the area, but it's not enough to recruit more or stop them from looking for work elsewhere because serving the public as a police officer or firefighter is not an easy job. Irregular work hours and trauma place an incredible amount of stress on the individual and their families. A major component of this bill is mandating the Commission to develop mental health wellness policies to be implemented in law enforcement agencies in the State at every level. If we do not have a supportive environment to take care of those who are serving, no amount of recruitment effort is going to address the staffing shortage.

This Bill seeks to address both recruitment and retention challenges. More public safety agencies can take advantage of the grant to aid their recruitment effort through apprenticeships and help them foster a positive relationship with the public, especially young individuals. It also establishes an annual accountability system that will ensure the effective implementation of mental health wellness policies. For these reasons, I respectfully request a **FAVORABLE** report on Senate Bill 470.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Steuart Pittman".

Steuart Pittman  
County Executive



**02.08.24 LOS SB 0470 Joint.pdf**

Uploaded by: Terry Hale

Position: FAV

*Danielle Hornberger*  
County Executive

Steven Overbay  
Director of Administration

Office: 410.996.5202  
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Jackie Gregory  
Council President

Robert Meffley  
Vice President

Office: 410.996.5201  
Email: [council@ccgov.org](mailto:council@ccgov.org)

**CECIL COUNTY GOVERNMENT**  
Cecil County Administration Building  
200 Chesapeake Boulevard, Elkton, MD 21921

February 8, 2024

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

RE: SB 0470 – Growing Apprenticeships and the Public Safety Workforce (GAPS) Act  
Letter of Support

Dear Chairman Smith, Vice Chair Waldstreicher and Members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee,

The County Council and the County Executive of Cecil County unanimously support SB 0470 - Growing Apprenticeships and the Public Safety Workforce (GAPS) Act. The hearing on this legislation is scheduled for February 9, 2024.

It is our understanding that this legislation is altering the Law Enforcement Cadet Apprenticeship Program in the Maryland Department of Labor to be the Public Safety Apprenticeship Program; expanding the purpose and scope of the Program to promote careers with certain public safety agencies; requiring the Maryland Police Training and Standards Commission to develop certain mental health wellness policies to be implemented in certain law enforcement agencies; establishing the Workgroup on Growing Engagement in the Law Enforcement Workforce; etc..

Cecil County strongly supports this, and any bill, that creates programs that offers assistance to help us both promote careers and ensure the mental health wellness in our public safety agencies.

The County Executive and County Council of Cecil County respectfully request that the Judicial Proceedings Committee send a favorable report on SB 0470.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D. Hornberger".

Danielle Hornberger  
County Executive

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jackie Gregory".

Jackie Gregory  
President of County Council

**SB 470 - GAPS Act- SWA FOP (1).pdf**

Uploaded by: Ari Plaut

Position: FWA

February 9, 2024

The Honorable Chairman Smith  
Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee

RE: **SB 470 – Growing Apprenticeships and the Public Safety Workforce (GAPS) Act**  
**Position: SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENTS**

Dear Mr. Chairman Smith and esteemed Members of the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee,

On behalf of the Maryland State Fraternal Order of Police (FOP), we support the Governor's bill, HB 597 – Growing Apprenticeships and the Public Safety Workforce (GAPS) Act. We request an amendment to this bill that would clarify that the peer support programs established by the bill would be "confidential." Our language below is the suggested amendment:

*(M) (1) (III) ESTABLISHING CONFIDENTIAL PEER SUPPORT PROGRAMS.*

We believe the amendment would clarify the policy to be developed by the Maryland Police Training and Standards Commission (MPTSC). It is important for our members to ensure that mental wellness policies remain confidential. In fact, the Legislature passed a similar bill in 2022 (SB 446) that created confidential peer support programs for fire, rescue, and emergency medical service entities. Our amendment is essentially mirroring the concept from that legislation.

Thank you again for your support and please let us know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Ari Plaut, Esq.

On Behalf of the FOP

**MML-SB 470 - FWA.pdf**

Uploaded by: Bill Jorch

Position: FWA



Maryland Municipal League  
*The Association of Maryland's Cities and Towns*

# TESTIMONY

February 9, 2024

**Committee:** Senate Judicial Proceedings

**Bill:** SB 470 - Growing Apprenticeships and the Public Safety Workforce (GAPS) Act

**Position:** Favorable with Amendment

**Reason for Position:**

The Maryland Municipal League supports Senate Bill 470, with an amendment. This bill will assist municipal law enforcement agencies develop a more robust workforce at a time when police officer recruitment and retention is difficult.

As municipal police departments seek new ways to recruit and retain qualified officers most of the provisions of this bill help achieve that goal. In particular, increasing the maximum grant amount to law enforcement agencies when taking on an eligible apprentice under the newly named Public Safety Apprenticeship Program will make a larger impact in defraying costs. The goals of the program align with those of local law enforcement: provide a pathway to a career in public safety and foster better relationships between law enforcement and the public.

Creation of a workgroup to look into staffing issues in law enforcement is also a beneficial aspect of this bill. There are lessons to be learned and best practices to be shared that this workgroup can help highlight. MML is honored to be seen as a partner in this endeavor as evidenced by the municipal seat on the workgroup.

There is one aspect of the bill that we are seeking to amend, the mandatory adoption by law enforcement agencies of mental health policies developed by the Commission. Many of the municipal police departments in the State already have mental health policies that they believe best fit the officers serving their community and a state-wide policy may not work everywhere. The MML amendment turns the policy developed by the Commission into a model that may be adopted by local law enforcement.

**MML Amendment: Page 5, line 4**

(M) (1) THE COMMISSION SHALL DEVELOP MENTAL HEALTH WELLNESS POLICIES AS A MODEL THAT MAY BE ~~TO BE~~ IMPLEMENTED IN LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES IN THE STATE BY:



**Maryland Municipal League**  
*The Association of Maryland's Cities and Towns*

The provisions of SB 470 should significantly assist municipal police agencies to better serve their communities through the development of their workforce. For this reason, the League respectfully requests that the committee provide Senate Bill 470 with a favorable report, with the above amendment.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:**

Theresa Kuhns

Angelica Bailey Thupari, Esq.

Bill Jorch

Justin Fiore

Chief Executive Officer

Director, Advocacy & Public Affairs

Director, Public Policy & Research

Deputy Director, Advocacy & Public Affairs

**BaltimoreCounty\_FWA\_SB0470.pdf**

Uploaded by: Robert McCullough

Position: FWA





JOHN A. OLSZEWSKI, JR.  
*County Executive*

JENNIFER AIOSA  
*Director of Government Affairs*

AMANDA KONTZ CARR  
*Legislative Officer*

WILLIAM J. THORNE  
*Legislative Associate*

**BILL NO.:**            **SB 470**

**TITLE:**                Growing Apprenticeships and the Public Safety Workforce  
(GAPS) Act

**SPONSOR:**          President Ferguson, By Request of the Administration

**COMMITTEE:**        Judicial Proceedings

**POSITION:**          **SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENTS**

**DATE:**                February 9, 2024

Baltimore County **SUPPORTS WITH AMENDMENTS** Senate Bill 470 – Growing Apprenticeships and the Public Safety Workforce (GAPS) Act. The program proposed by this legislation provides an avenue for law enforcement, fire, and emergency medical service agencies to enhance their hiring programs through apprenticeships.

The GAPS Act takes meaningful steps to enhance the growth and retention of the public safety workforce. The legislation would strengthen an existing apprenticeship to create a viable pathway to employment with the agency. SB 470 would additionally create a commission to investigate best practices for the hiring and retention of law enforcement, fire, and EMS employees. Furthermore, the GAPS Act would require the creation and implementation of wellness programs to support the needs of public safety employees. The Baltimore County Police Department and Fire Department believe these apprenticeship programs, the proposed commission, and the wellness supports will address hiring shortages and increase diversity and inclusion in the workforce. Baltimore County supports the amendment proposed by the Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) to include the Departments of Public Safety and Corrections to the commission created under the bill.

Accordingly, Baltimore County urges a **FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS** report on SB 470 from the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee. For more information, please contact Jenn Aiosa, Director of Government Affairs at [jaiosa@baltimorecountymd.gov](mailto:jaiosa@baltimorecountymd.gov).

**SB0470-JPR\_MACo\_SWA.pdf**

Uploaded by: Sarah Sample

Position: FWA



## **Senate Bill 470**

### *Growing Apprenticeships and the Public Safety Workforce (GAPS) Act*

MACo Position: **SUPPORT WITH  
AMENDMENTS**

To: Judicial Proceedings Committee

Date: February 9, 2024

From: Sarah Sample

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **SUPPORTS SB 470 WITH AMENDMENTS**. This bill seeks to bolster the public safety workforce across Maryland, which is experiencing historic challenges. The bill expands resources for qualifying public safety apprenticeships and invests in support services and workforce enhancements. MACo amendments would include corrections officials in the membership and mission of the proposed effort.

Local emergency services, fire, corrections, and law enforcement officials are the foundation of public safety. Broadening eligibility for funding from the Law Enforcement Cadet Apprenticeship Program to all agents of the public safety ecosystem sends an important message about how much governments and communities value these roles. This is a resource that local law enforcement, detention centers, and fire safety divisions can use to rebuild a qualified and enthusiastic pipeline of new employees.

Other bill provisions include a commission to implement mental health and wellness standards for law enforcement and establish the Workgroup to Grow Engagement in Law Enforcement. Corrections officers have a comparable risk of severe injury, trauma, and long-term adverse health effects. They are suffering the same challenges in terms of staff vacancies, leading to persistent overtime shifts. Corrections officers are not as publicly visible as police officers, who work in the communities, therefore their needs often go unrecognized and overlooked – but their efforts are just as important.

As the rehabilitative arm of the justice system, these professionals look out for and care for some of Maryland's most vulnerable populations, and they need resources and efforts being made to look out for them. County amendments to SB 470, generally, are to include local and state corrections officers among the membership of the commission and the workgroup as well as in the charge of tasks therein. There is a great deal of crossover between the corrections and law enforcement workforces, which is why considering their needs together will make them both stronger independent agencies.

Counties appreciate the effort to consider public safety professions from a more holistic perspective but believe the effort must go further to continue that inclusion for all measures of the bill. For these reasons, MACo urges a report of **FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS** for SB 470.

## AMENDMENTS OFFERED BY MACo

On page 5, before line 2 insert:

**“(E) “DETENTION CENTER” MEANS LOCAL OR STATE CORRECTIONAL FACILITY.”**

On page 5, amend lines 2 through 7 to read:

**(M) (1) THE COMMISSION SHALL DEVELOP MENTAL HEALTH WELLNESS POLICIES TO BE IMPLEMENTED IN LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES AND DETENTION CENTERS IN THE STATE BY:**

**(I) DETERMINING WAYS TO PROMOTE SAFETY AND WELLNESS AT EVERY LEVEL OF A LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCY AND DETENTION CENTER;**

**(II) INCORPORATING INTO TRAININGS STRESS MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES DESIGNED BY LAW ENFORCEMENT AND CORRECTIONS OFFICERS;**

On page 5, amend lines 19 and 20 to read:

(a) There is a Workgroup on Growing Engagement in the Law Enforcement and Detention Center Workforce.

On page 6, after line 9 add:

(12) one state member of the Maryland Correctional Administrators Association; and

(13) one county member of the Maryland Correctional Administrators Association

On page 6, amend lines 20 through 25 to read:

(1) identify and study the shortage of employees in the law enforcement and corrections fields;

(2) determine ways to advertise and promote law enforcement and detention center employment opportunities across the State; and

(3) make recommendations on incentives or other methods to increase the number of employees in the law enforcement and detention center workforce.

**SB 470\_AFSCME3\_INFO.pdf**

Uploaded by: Denise Gilmore

Position: INFO



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**SB 470 - Growing Apprenticeships and the Public Safety Workforce (GAPS) Act  
Judicial Proceedings  
February 9, 2024**

**LETTER OF INFORMATION**

AFSCME Council 3 respectfully submits this letter of information for your consideration of SB 470. This legislation replaces the Law Enforcement Cadet Apprenticeship Program in the Maryland Department of Labor (MDL) to become the Public Safety Apprenticeship Program which now includes state correctional officers and juvenile services workers. AFSCME Council 3 is the exclusive bargaining representative for these workers. In the bill, MDL continues to administer the program and awards grants under the program to eligible public safety agencies who employ at least one apprentice who has been employed by the agency for at least 7 months and is in a registered apprenticeship program with the Maryland Apprenticeship and Training Council (MATC).

The [final report](#) of the Workgroup on Apprenticeships in Public Safety highlighted that a “*crucial next step for program development is engagement and inclusion of the union(s) who represent the bargaining unit for each respective position.*” Additionally, the report states, “*registered apprenticeship regulations require employers to engage with unions whenever an apprenticeship program is proposed for workers.*”

**To date, no one has contacted AFSCME regarding the proposed apprenticeship programs being established in SB 470.**

Further, the Workgroup’s very first recommendation for Apprenticeships in Public Safety in Maryland was to “*encourage government agencies to partner with MD Labor, DBM, LWDBs, and Bargaining Units to assess workforce needs and explore apprenticeship options.*” This recommendation singles out DBM’s role for initiating these discussions with employee unions, and this conversation has not happened yet either.

While AFSCME supports the development of apprenticeships in our bargaining units, SB 470 might be premature given that none of the prerequisite discussions have occurred, including on which types of jobs should be apprenticeable. We continue to oppose efforts to bring correctional workers under the required minimum age of 21 into our state prisons and have similar concerns about youth workers in juvenile detention settings. Thank for your considering this letter of information.