



February 27, 2024

Senate Bill 1101

Scholarships and Police Officer Recruitment

Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee

Position: FAVORABLE

Anne Arundel County **SUPPORTS** Senate Bill 1101 - Scholarships and Police Officer Recruitment. This Bill will support police officer recruitment efforts by requiring law enforcement agencies to develop and implement recruitment policies at historically black colleges and universities and establishing scholarships for police officers and their dependents.

Public safety is one of the most fundamental roles of government. Given that our police departments are a foundational pillar of public safety, their membership should also reflect the composition of the diverse populations they serve. Effective policing is not just about numbers; our police departments are more than just patrol officers on the ground. The support network that is tasked with important roles such as crisis intervention, criminal investigations, special operations, and community outreach is equally important in contributing to our public safety. To effectively carry out those duties, we need good officers serving in their own communities, where they share a common background and have a nuanced understanding of the particular needs of those communities. Requiring law enforcement agencies to develop and implement recruitment policies at HBCUs will help police departments foster a positive relationship with the public and enlist their help to serve the public better.

Another challenge to police recruitment and retention is posed by the nature of the work. Irregular work hours and trauma place an incredible amount of stress on the individual and their families, which can result in officers looking for work elsewhere. Establishing the Educational Benefits Scholarships for officers and dependents will help make their benefits package more competitive and attractive, and demonstrate the public appreciation for the sacrifice and service that the police officers and their families make.

For all of these reasons, I respectfully request a **FAVORABLE** report on Senate Bill 1101.

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

Steuart Pittman
County Executive