

Baltimore City Sheriff's Office

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TO: The Honorable Members of the House Appropriations Committee

FROM: Nicholas T.R. Blendy, Esq., Assistant Sheriff, Baltimore City Sheriff's Office

RE: House Bill 1091 – Baltimore City Sheriff's Office – Collective Bargaining – Compensation

DATE: March 12, 2025

POSITION: FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENT

Chair Barnes, Vice Chair Chang, and members of the Committee, please be advised that the Baltimore City Sheriff's Office (BCSO) **supports with amendment** House Bill (HB) 1091.

HB 1091, if enacted, is intended to clarify that the exclusive representative bargaining unit within the BCSO for full time sworn law enforcement officers and court security officer—which is currently recognized as the Fraternal Order of Police Lodge 22 (FOP 22)—has the authority to bargain wages as part of the three-party FOP 22 labor contract with the BCSO and the City of Baltimore (City).

During the previous negotiations between the parties for the current FOP 22 contract—which was ratified during the previous Sheriff's Administration—there was disagreement between the three parties about whether FOP 22 had the authority to negotiate salary and wages as part of the process. This disagreement has yet to be resolved, which is the problem that this legislation is intended to solve. We believe that HB 1091 will put this issue to rest and make clear that FOP 22 does have the authority to bargain salary and wages as part of labor negotiations, which the BCSO argues is the foundational right of labor unions, and a right that Sheriff Cogen fully supports. Additionally, the BCSO notes the importance of the effective date of the legislation being set at June 1, 2025, because if this bill is enacted, it will be effective before the current contract is set to expire on June 30, 2025, which means that the next contract will be able to include the right to bargain wages, which is of the utmost importance to the BCSO.

The BCSO does note that it believes there is a need to adopt a technical amendment, which is being offered by the bill sponsor. The amendment will eliminate a redundancy and remove confusion by consolidating the provisions of paragraphs (ii) and (iii) within Section 2-316(i)(3) under one coherent paragraph and striking the redundant language entirely. By passing HB 1091 with this amendment language included, the statute will make crystal clear that FOP 22 has the right to bargain "...compensation, **including salary, wages...**" as part of the three-party bargaining process between itself and the Sheriff and the City.

For the foregoing reasons, the BCSO respectfully requests a **favorable with amendment** report on HB 1091, which is the posture voted unanimously by the Baltimore City House Delegation.