

Baltimore City Sheriff's Office

Samuel Cogen, Sheriff

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TO: The Honorable Members of the Senate Finance 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 25, 2025

POSITION: FAVORABLE

Chair Beidle, Vice Chair Hayes, and members of the Senate Finance Committee, please be advised that the Baltimore City Sheriff's Office (BCSO) **supports** House Bill (HB) 1091.

In its current posture, HB 1091, if enacted, would clarify that the exclusive representative bargaining unit within the BCSO for full time sworn law enforcement officers and court security officers—currently, the Fraternal Order of Police Lodge 22 (FOP 22)—has the authority to bargain wages as part of a 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 notes that that with the changes to the statute proposed by HB 1091, it 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. (Emphasis added).

For the foregoing reasons, the BCSO respectfully requests a **favorable** report on HB 1091.