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SB 621 Courtroom Security – Minimum Adequate Security Standard

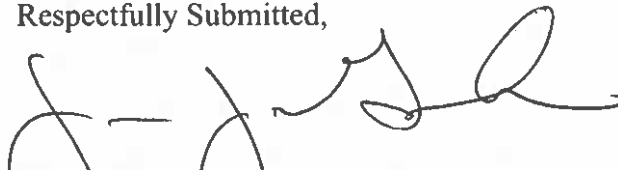
Position: **OPPOSE (UNF)**

The Talbot County Sheriff's Office opposes SB621 – Courtroom Security – Minimum Adequate Security Standard. We fully support providing adequate security for our courtrooms to ensure public safety, however, this bill is an unfunded mandate that would negatively impact our local budget and police services. We currently have five dedicated positions to serve in our Circuit Courts with one of those positions being a longstanding vacancy that has been a challenge to fill.

If this bill should pass, I would need to add four more deputies at a total cost of \$1,024,000 for a lateral deputy. To train a new deputy it would cost the county approximately \$100,000 for the first year. This added cost would include vehicles, training and equipment. Given the challenge of finding a deputy to fulfill my current vacancy, if this bill were to pass, I would be required to pull a deputy from a patrol or specialized unit to fill the unfunded mandated vacancy. This would have devastating consequences on the level of safety and support my office could provide for the community.

While I recognize this bill may not intend to have negative consequences on those of us in law enforcement, we would however face a continuum of challenges attempting to fill these positions with qualified deputies. I would humbly suggest letting the jurisdictional Circuit Judges and the elected Sheriffs of each county establish a guideline of minimum security standards instead of an unfunded mandate by the State. I hope that you will consider my testimony in your decision to oppose SB 621.

Respectfully Submitted,



Sheriff Joseph Gamble
Talbot County Sheriff