



Maryland Chiefs of Police Association Maryland Sheriffs' Association



MEMORANDUM

TO: The Honorable Luke Clippinger, Chair and
Members of the Judiciary Committee

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

DATE: February 11, 2025

RE: **HB 560 Criminal Law – Fraud – Possession of Residential Real Property**

POSITION: LETTER OF INFORMATION

The Maryland Chiefs of Police Association (MCPA) and the Maryland Sheriffs' Association (MSA) submits the letter of information on HB 560. This bill prohibits a person from possessing a residential real property that the person does not lawfully possess or own with the intent to defraud another. It also establishes procedures under which a sheriff's office must remove a person who is allegedly in violation of this bill.

Jurisdictions across Maryland have procedures in place to remove individuals from property in which they legally do not have an ownership right. However, there does seem to be gaps that need to be addressed to ensure individuals known as "squatters" do not illegally take occupancy of a property.

This issue is complicated, and while MCPA and MSA appreciate the intent of this legislation, solutions need to be workable and provide for due process. To address all the legal aspects of this issue and ensure solutions are workable, MCPA and MSA suggest an interim workgroup be established to examine the issue and develop recommendations to be considered next session.