



## Maryland State's Attorneys' Association

3300 North Ridge Road, Suite 185

Ellicott City, Maryland 21043

410-203-9881

FAX 410-203-9891

Rich Gibson  
President

Steven I. Kroll  
Coordinator

**DATE:**                   **January 17, 2025**

**BILL NUMBER:**    **HB 64**

**POSITION:**           **Unfavorable**

The Maryland State's Attorneys' Association (MSAA) opposes House Bill 64 and urges this Committee to issue an unfavorable report.

HB 64 is one of a number of bills introduced this session – including HB 126, HB 135, HB 143, HB 177, HB 210, HB 280, and HB 291 – that deal with the theft of mail. This bill criminalizes the theft of mail as a felony offense, and provides for a maximum sentence of five years in prison.

Although MSAA recognizes the disruptive effects of mail theft, and can appreciate that the harm caused by the theft of important mail is often greatly in excess of the value of the piece of mail itself, the maximum sentence proposed by HB 64 is excessive. Treating the theft of a letter or package as equivalent to the theft of property with a value of up to \$25,000, regardless of the actual value of the letter or package stolen, is disproportionate and leads to absurd results – because of the special status HB 64 affords letters and packages, a perpetrator who steals a package containing, say, an inexpensive lawn decoration would be subject to felony criminal liability, while a perpetrator who commits the same offense after the decoration has been removed from the package and placed in the lawn would not. The law, as it exists, affords prosecutors adequate tools to bring perpetrators who would steal valuable letters and packages to justice.

HB 64 also creates a special set of victim notification requirements that apply only to victims of this offense. Our current system already affords victims, including victims of mail theft, the information necessary to play a meaningful role in the prosecution of a case, if they choose to do so – the automatic victim notification requirements contained in HB 64 are unnecessary and administratively burdensome.