



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: January 28, 2025

RE: **HB 259 – Public Safety – Statewide DNA Database System, DNA Collection, and Penalties - Alterations**

POSITION: SUPPORT

The Maryland Chiefs of Police Association (MCPA) and the Maryland Sheriffs' Association (MSA) **SUPPORT HB 259**. This bill addresses issues associated with the DNA database statute.

The Maryland Department of State Police's Forensic Sciences Division oversees the statewide DNA database. This database has been an incredibly successful tool over the years, assisting investigators to implicate perpetrators, exonerate the falsely accused, and link serial crimes in Maryland and across state lines. MCPA and MSA believe this bill will close loopholes in the statute making the database an even more valuable tool in solving crimes.

In addition, the bill provides for the protection of employees who may find themselves in situations where individuals refuse to provide a sample. Should this occur, employees who attempt to take samples will be deemed as meeting their charge. Any individual who refuses to submit a DNA sample will then be referred to the State's Attorney's Office for prosecution. As several Sheriffs oversee local detention facilities, this language is very important to protect the men and women who serve as officers in these facilities.

MCPA and MSA support all efforts for operational improvements to make the DNA database more effective and appreciates the employee protection language for circumstances where individuals may refuse to provide samples.

For these reasons, MCPA and MSA **SUPPORT HB 259** and urge a **FAVORABLE** Committee report.