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February 24, 2025

The Honorable Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Judiciary Committee
Maryland House of Delegates
100 Taylor House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: **Letter of Support for House Bill 885** – Public Safety – Police Accountability – Investigation Records
Relating to Unfounded and Exonerated Complaints

Dear Chair Clippinger, Vice-Chair Bartlett, and Members of the Judiciary Committee,

As Cecil County Executive and a retired law enforcement officer, I am writing to express my strong support for HB 885, which seeks to expunge unfounded and exonerated complaints from a law enforcement officer's personnel file. As a community, we want and need our police to be accountable and governments should act when warranted. However, being accountable doesn't mean that one is in the wrong – it simply means an officer is required to stand by their decisions and account for what they did. It is the investigation that determines whether wrongdoing occurred. An investigation determining that the allegation never occurred, or the actions taken were justified, is still holding our police accountable to the high standards we expect of them.

It is only fair that if we are to keep a record of sustained complaints to ensure accountability, we must also allow expungement for those who have been cleared, as to avoid "scarlet letter" scenarios where the mere presence of adverse material – unfounded or not – can follow a good officer for the rest of their career. It may also undermine their credibility in court, where a *Brady* discovery can impugn an officer's testimony, thus needlessly jeopardizing government's first priority of ensuring the safety of our constituents. The criminal justice system provides records expungement for defendants found not guilty and law enforcement officers deserve no less.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I urge you to look **favorably** on HB 885.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Adam Streight", is written over a horizontal line.

Adam Streight
County Executive