

Dear **Members of the Judiciary Committee**,

This testimony is being submitted by Showing Up for Racial Justice Baltimore, a group of individuals working to move white folks as part of a multi-racial movement for equity and racial justice in Baltimore City, Baltimore County, and Howard County. We are also working in collaboration with the Campaign for Justice, Safety, and Jobs. I am a resident of **District 46**, and I am testifying in support of **HB0122 - Police Accountability - Police Complainant**.



Showing Up for Racial Justice

The Maryland Police Accountability Act of 2021 mandated a civilian-run Police Accountability Board, or PAB, for each police department across the state. PAB members receive public complaints about police misconduct and perform additional functions such as reviewing outcomes after the department's Administrative Charging Committee (ACC) investigates disciplinary matters, examining overall trends and policies in how officers are disciplined, and drafting annual written reports identifying trends and recommending policy changes. **Passing HB0122 would strengthen the MD Police Accountability Act by allowing police officers, as well as members of the public, to file complaints with the PAB about any misconduct by police.** Officers facing the difficult task of how to respond to a colleague's misconduct would have the PAB as an additional resource, rather than relying solely on internal investigative processes.

Officers who want to report police misconduct may be hampered by their profession's unofficial code of silence. Whistleblowers frequently face obstruction or retribution from fellow officers or from their supervisors, who may retaliate by "weaponiz[ing] internal affairs, pursuing minor rule infractions such as breaking the chain of command, in order to discredit whistleblowers and get rid of them."¹ Fear of such retaliation can keep an officer silent about colleagues' misconduct, thus allowing police misconduct to continue and contributing to public distrust of police.

It is crucial that honorable, law-abiding officers have multiple avenues to file complaints about police misconduct. These avenues should include the civilian-run Police Accountability Boards as well as internal investigative bodies. Good police officers are pillars of our communities, and they deserve to have the same access to the PAB that other community members have. It is for these reasons that I am encouraging you to vote **in support of HB0122 - Police Accountability - Police Complainant**.

Thank you for your time, service, and consideration.

Sincerely,

Lindsay Keipper
2425 Fleet St.

Showing Up for Racial Justice Baltimore

¹ Gina Barton, Brett Murphy, and Daphne Duret. (15 Nov 2021). "Devastating consequences — professional and personal — for cops who 'rat' about misconduct." *USA Today*. Retrieved from <https://www.usatoday.com/story/story-series/2021/11/15/cops-risk-their-jobs-when-they-report-colleagues-misconduct/6355677001/>